STORIES

FROM

FROISSART.

BY THE LATE

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AUTHOR OF "GILBERT EARLE," "TALES OF THE PASSIONS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR HENRY COLBURN,

BY RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON-STREET.

MDCCCXXXII.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Stamford-Street.

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OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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OF

FROISSAR'



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

OF

FROISSART;

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SPIRIT OF HIS TIMES.

[BEING INTRODUCTORY TO THE STORY OF "THE COURT OF THE COUNT OF FOIX."]

I HAVE chosen to insert the Biographical Notice of Froissart in this place, rather than at the head of the selections from his writings, for the following reasons. The stories, given in the preceding volume, of 'the Battle of Poitiers,' and 'the Black Prince in Spain,' are taken from Froissart's two first books—those which follow are from the two last. Now these books were not only written at very different periods, but are, also, as it appears to me, distinguishable by a very strongly-marked difference of tone and manner. The first and second I should designate as history—the third and fourth as historical memoir. In the former, the author, in his own person, appears but very rarely on the scene;—in the latter, he is, with slight exceptions, the centre from which all his narratives emanate. He gives his personal adventures, his personal feelings, opinions, and views: and a considerable proportion of

even the public events which he records belong less to general history, than do the important and celebrated passages which he had before recorded. His third and fourth books, which constitute the second volume*, are very much of the nature of the *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire*, which, during the last two centuries, became so numerous and so excellent in France. Of the author of such works, it is peculiarly necessary to have some detailed knowledge. The well-known commencement of the Spectator (a work which, in domestic manners, depends as much upon the author personally as a history of more general interest) is the expression of an almost universal feeling—but it is not the first one. Giraldus Cambrensis, in his portraiture of Henry II., says, "It were not amiss, but very requisite that we should (for a perfect remembrance of the king), describe and set forth the nature and conditions both of his inward and outward man: that men, who shall be desirous hereafter to learn and read his most noble acts in chivalry, may also, as it were before their eyes, conceive his very nature and lively portraiture." And he is right;—for we naturally desire to know the appearance and manners of men of whose acts we read. The acts themselves, however, to a certain degree, set forth the nature and extent of their talents and qualities. But of the recorder of those acts, it is not so. Few historians leave behind them memoirs such as those of Giraldus himself†. By

* Lord Berners' Translation, 2 vols. 4to.—reprinted 1812.
† "*De rebus à se gestis.*"

it, we may see a most faithful and curious portrait of his mind—and, with that, we season and qualify our opinions of his history. Of Froissart there is no such work; but his character, and in part the history of his life, may be traced in his Chronicles:—not given directly, indeed, but appearing incidentally and unconsciously, in a manner far more characteristic than any set piece of auto-biography could have proved. The spirit and worth of his history are to be measured thereby; and it is to be wished that every historian had furnished us with the means of applying a similar standard. The credit, indeed, to be attached to the narrative must depend, in a very great degree, upon the disposition and circumstances of the narrator. In periods so far removed from our own as that to which these stories chiefly relate, our means of correcting inaccuracies must, of necessity, be so slight, as to render some knowledge of this kind doubly requisite. For, even when there may be no intention to deceive, different colouring is (perhaps unconsciously) given to the same facts, according to the social position, the habits, feelings, and modes of thinking, of the several writers. According to the quality and degree of talent, of energy, of virtue, of opportunity—even according to the general dispositions of the age as well as of the individual, the picture will vary, though the outline may be the same. There will be, to continue the metaphor, more labour bestowed upon one part of the painting than upon another—the forte of one artist may be in strong effects of light and shade, in vivid

and striking contrasts;—another may excel in brilliancy and splendour—another in gloom; a fourth, again, in calm, gentle, softened excellence, equably spread over the whole piece. The same outline might have been sketched by the same hand for all of them; but the variety of the filling up would cause the finished pictures all to differ, though all were equally true to the original drawing. Thus it is with history; indeed, with narration of all kinds. Facts are the outlines of narrative; the motives, causes, accompaniments, consequences, of those facts are the colouring which gives completeness, and, as it were, reality, to the portraiture. Now, it is evident that the pens of writers will differ as much as the pencils of painters. Their position in society—the age in which they live—their country, their language, their temper and disposition,—will all affect their habits of thought, and, thence, of composition. Like the knights and the shield, one will represent the silver side, the other the gold—and each will think they are, nay will *be*, in the right, as far as their opportunities of knowledge could lead them. Froissart's personal character more than usually tinges his narrative: and thence I am induced to devote some lengthened consideration to his life, and to the memorable times in which he lived.

It is very possible that many of my readers may not remember—perhaps may never have known—that Froissart was an ecclesiastic. The usual appellation, arising from respect to his profession, being identical

with the knightly title, has, probably, contributed to cast out of view that he was not, in fact, a knight: for neither the manner nor the matter of his Chronicles is very likely to remind his readers of his real calling. He talks of courts and camps, of battles and negotiations, like a knight brave in the one and sage in the other, and lets out the churchman only in occasional anathemas against such as in any way resist or offend the authority of "Holy Church." And even this would not be out of place from a layman of that period.

Froissart, indeed, in more respects than one, is strongly illustrative of the very remarkable era at which he lived. Naturally good-humoured, kindly-natured, and even humane, he would, if he had flourished at a milder period, have equally, nay more than equally, displayed the agreeable and amiable qualities which so strongly distinguish his writings, without the drawbacks from the moral worth and dignity of his character, which are now so sensibly felt. I allude to the careless tone in which he records the looser passages of his life; and, more especially, to the slight manner in which he reprobates acts of the greatest cruelty. Merely average inhumanity he, perhaps, could not be expected very loudly to condemn; for it seems, in those days, to have been far too common to attract any peculiar notice or reproof whatever. It was, in every sense of the term, a matter of course.

This general characteristic of his age seems to have

been imbibed by Froissart in that degree which might be expected from a satisfied, easy man—who is content to float along the gliding stream, rather than undergo the exertion and the danger necessary to stem it. In one instance, indeed, which the reader will meet with early in the following story, he is roused to an exclamation of pity. But the feeling immediately passes off; and he, very shortly after, quietly talks of the absolute perfection of the princely personage whose super-eminent cruelty had wrung this exclamation from him*.

Treachery, Ferocity, and Cruelty—Cruelty, Ferocity, and Treachery—these were the essential characteristics of this era—these constitute the 'spirit of Froissart's Times.' They present a series of rapine, fraud, violence, and murder, which excites wonder how the human race ever passed through them without extirpation. I do not now allude only to the burnings and devastations of open war, or the outrages of civil disunion; these *did* thin the population of Europe, to a degree which is now far too commonly forgotten†. I speak also of the private murders which the ferocity, ingratitude, and general hardness of feeling, belonging to those ages, rendered of such fearful frequency—ages, when the nearest and dearest ties were of no more force than flax in the fire—when profligacy was

* See "Death of Sir Peter Ernaut," pp. 74, et seq., and Notes 2 and 7 to Gaston de Foix.

† In France, during the English wars; in England, during the wars of the Roses.

reduced to a sophisticated system under the abused name of Love—and when open violence and covert treachery were alternate in adding to the awful sum of human slaughter! If the reader think I exaggerate, I only beg he will turn to the history of the factions of Burgundy and Armagnac—to the Pontificate of Urban VI.—to the contentions for the crown of Naples,—to the story, which he will presently read, of "the Court of the Count of Foix."—He will find that no strength of language can equal the calls for its use—that no superlative can be hyperbolical in speaking of those times.

Not to dwell too long upon so disagreeable a theme, I shall now proceed to give some account of the Life and Writings of Froissart; and shall only introduce incidentally the further observations I may have to make upon the Spirit of his Times.

John Froissart was born at Valenciennes, in Hainault, about the year 1337. It is supposed that his father was a herald painter; a profession at that time in considerable repute, and which was singularly in keeping with the future tastes and pursuits of the son. He seems, indeed, to have manifested these, and other predilections, at a very early period; for, from the age of twelve, "well I loved," says he, "to see danses and carolling, well to hear minstrelsy and tales of glee, well to attach myself to those who loved hounds and hawks, well to toy with my fair companions at school; and methought I had the art well to win their grace." This might be all very fit for the future

courtier; but it seems a curious kind of education for a person who was destined to be "priest, canon, and treasurer, of the collegiate church of Chimay." Nothing, indeed, can more fully represent a man of voluptuous and self-indulgent habits, than the above catalogue of his tastes; and the concluding intimation of his favour with the fair, gives a glimpse of the poet of love,—the devoted minstrel, as well as chronicler, of the merits of the softer sex. He was, also, a *bon-vivant*—he says that his "ears quickened at the sound of uncorking the wine-flask; for," continues he, "I took great pleasure in drinking, and in fair array, and in delicate and fresh cates. I love to see (as is reason) the early violets, and the white and red roses, and also chambers fairly lighted; justs, dances, and late vigils; and fair beds for refreshment; and, for my better repose, a night draught of Claret or Rochelle wine, mingled with spice." This is pretty well, I think, for one sworn to celibacy and temperance! But, the natural propensity proved too strong for the professional vow.

Froissart became an historian very early in life; and he seems, from the first, to have adopted the plan of travelling into all parts, where he thought he could obtain materials. He was scarcely twenty years old, when, as he tells us, "his dear lord and master, Sir Robert de Namur, knight, lord of Beaufort," instigated him to write a history of the French wars. He begins as far back as the year 1326—and the narrative of the period down to the Battle of Poitiers, in 1356, is

chiefly taken from the chronicles of Jean le Bel, canon of Liege; whose information would seem principally to have been derived from the confidence of John of Hainault. Froissart speaks in high terms of his industry and correctness. From the Battle of Poitiers down to 1400—in which year Froissart's history terminates, he may be considered a contemporary; and the pains which he took to acquire information were excessive and unceasing. He appears to have possessed, to an extraordinary degree, the faculty of insinuating himself into the favour, and even the confidence, of those with whom he mixed; and this circumstance, joined to the desire of the nobles and knights, with whom he conversed, to have their deeds recorded in his history, caused him to derive a great proportion of his facts from those who had been eye-witnesses, and even actors, in them. He was admitted into the houses of persons of the highest rank and merit. He was six years clerk of the closet, or secretary, to Queen Philippa; and in this court, in the French court, and in those of the subordinate potentates to which he travelled, he was indefatigable in gathering information both from counsellors and warriors, and also from heralds, who, in those days, were the chief agents of diplomacy.

The thirty years, on the other hand, from 1326 to 1356, are not given as from his own knowledge, and ought rather to be considered as a preliminary detail calculated to put the reader in possession of the facts necessary for him to understand that which is to fol-

low. It is clear that a history of those times, beginning at the Battle of Poitiers, would be obscure and unintelligible to the last degree. It is to obviate this, that the narrative of the preceding thirty years is given, and accordingly it does not possess, to the same extent, those qualities of spirit and picturesqueness, for which Froissart's writings are generally remarkable.

It is, nevertheless, from these very merits that Froissart's chief faults arise; namely, an avidity to receive and to record everything which can add dramatic effect to his history, without too scrupulously examining into its foundation in fact. I have already alluded* to the doubts that exist as to the colouring which he gives to the celebrated story of the six citizens of Calais. It is an incident peculiarly striking and dramatic in itself, and redounds to the honour of the fair sex in general, and of his benefactress in particular—temptations which would make Froissart think any extraordinary investigation into its accuracy quite superfluous. Again, in the following story, the reader will find a marvellous account of a spirit who "brought tidings from all parts of the world," and of a talking bear, which Froissart recites, with some expressions of surprise, indeed, but with no more doubt than the physical facts of the Battle of Crecy and the captivity of the French king.

The first part of his history Froissart presented to

* "Digression on the Claim of Edward III. to the Crown of France," Vol. I.

Queen Philippa on his going to England in 1361. His object in quitting his country was to tear himself from an attachment through which he had suffered for some time. This attachment he alludes to constantly in his poetry; and it is difficult to distinguish between real facts, and those adventitious embellishments with which poets have always conceived themselves to be licensed to adorn the history of their loves. Certain it is, that a poem in which he states that he is called upon by Mercury to revise the Judgment of Paris—that he confirms it—and that Venus, in consequence, promises him a mistress more beautiful than Helen—cannot be supposed entirely to consist of sober fact;—yet there are some circumstances which would lead to the conclusion that the fiction was embroidered upon some ground of reality. He seems, however, to have had more loves than one—as he celebrates one under the name of Anne, another under that of Alix, and a third by a poem entitled "Dittie de la fleur Marguerite," in honour of the flower which bore her name.

Froissart returned into Hainault for a short time; and then, going again to England, attached himself to the service of Queen Philippa. This princess highly patronized letters. Queen's College, in Oxford, was founded by her; and Froissart being, at once, a learned person, a countryman, a poet, and a courtier, fraught with the accomplishments to which the tastes recorded above naturally lead,—it was no wonder

that he was received by her with favour and protection.

During his stay in her service, it would appear that he was employed in the composition of romances of love, for her amusement. The fopperies of gallantry, by which the middle ages were distinguished, had not yet entirely passed away. It was scarcely more than an hundred years since the courts of love had ceased to be held, and some of the same spirit existed still*. The story told of the institution of the Order of the Garter is singularly in keeping with it. In despite of

* At a Court of Love, held in 1174, by the Countess of Champagne, it was solemnly decided, after long argument, That love cannot exist between two married persons! These courts were held with all the solemnity, and, if possible, with more than the technical pedantry and jargon, of those of the Palais, or of Westminster Hall. "The Code of Love" was, I believe, originally drawn up in Latin, at least, it was soon translated into it. Its provisions were as compulsory as those of the Code Napoléon. In conformity with the first article of these extraordinary Pandects, Ermengarde, Viscountess of Narbonne, is said to have pronounced the following decision:—A lady, who had entered into an engagement of love, upon forming an honourable marriage, refused her accustomed favours to her lover. Ermengarde condemned this *breach of faith*, and decided, in perfect conformity with the first article of the Code of Love, that the supervention of the tie of marriage did not justly exclude her former love, unless she solemnly renounced all love whatever! I wonder what the Viscount of Narbonne and the Count of Champagne thought of these decisions of their fair spouses! For a very interesting and curious account of the Courts of Love, see the third volume of *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, Art. *Literary History of the Provençals.*

the doubt which it has been attempted to throw upon this tradition,—I am inclined to believe that it must have been founded in fact, from the very circumstance of a *Garter* being the peculiar Badge of the Order. The Order of St. George would speak for itself; but a garter is an emblem bearing no knightly or national characteristic whatever.

At a court like this it is no wonder that Froissart was a favourite. He appears, indeed, to have been treated with peculiar kindness and liberality by the Queen: for, during the period he was attached to her household, he travelled into many parts of Europe, at her expense, seeking, according to his custom, materials to correct and enrich his history. Among other places, he went to Scotland, where, as usual, he seems to have been universally well received. His equipage had in it nothing very imposing; for he travelled on horseback, with his portmanteau behind him, and a greyhound at his heels*. He was entertained by William, Earl of Douglas, at his palace of Dalkeith; and he seems always to have preserved a grateful remembrance of the courtesies that he met with there. He travelled also into Wales, about the same period.

He was present at the parting of Edward III. and his Queen from the Prince and Princess of Wales, on

* Froissart appears to have been an amateur of dogs; for, on his visit to the Court of Gaston de Foix, he took to that prince, who was a great hunter, four greyhounds, as a present. He has recorded their names, which were, Tristan, Hector, Brun, and Rollant.

the departure of the latter into Acquitaine in 1361. He also witnessed the passage of King John of France, between Eltham and Westminster, on his return into England in 1363. In 1366, he went to Bourdeaux, and accompanied the Black Prince, on his expedition into Spain, as far as Dax; but he was disappointed in his hopes of being present during the campaign; for, on the army again moving forward, the Prince, from what reason it does not appear, sent Froissart back to England to the Queen.

He did not remain there long; for, in the following year, we find him travelling among the courts in the north of Italy. This enabled him to be present at the marriage of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, second son of Edward III., to Joland, daughter of Galeas, Duke of Milan. This marriage was celebrated on the 25th of April, 1368. Froissart gives a detailed description of the magnificent reception which Amadeus, Count of Savoy (surnamed the Count Verd) gave to the English Prince on his return. The feasts lasted three days; and Froissart makes honourable mention of a virelay of his own composition which was danced during their course. The Count Verd made Froissart a present of "a good Cottehardie*." In the purse attached to this coat, were twenty florins of gold. This manner of making gifts to poets and minstrels was very much in use at the time; and Froissart seems to have taken considerable pride in this instance of it.

* A species of tunic, common to men and women.

He continued his travels in Italy; visited Bologna, and Ferrara, where he received a similar present from the King of Cyprus. He went on to Rome, where he mentions having seen an emperor at the papal court. It is supposed that this was the Grecian emperor, Palæologus, who came to Rome in 1369 to beg assistance against the Turks.

This year was the date of the heaviest loss which could possibly befall Froissart. Queen Philippa of England died. This princess appears to have been a very favourable specimen of the noble dames of her time. If not distinguished for warlike deeds, like Jane de Montfort, or Jane of Blois,—it was because she was never, like them, deprived of those natural protectors, during whose presence the battle-field is anything but the province of woman.* Her court was distinguished for all the brilliancies and amenities which existed in her age; and no reason has reached posterity for supposing that they were degraded by the profligacy which too commonly attended them. The following is the account which Froissart gives of her death. He was not, indeed, in England at the time; nor did he return thither for upwards of twenty-seven years; but he could not fail of having ample information on the subject.

"In the mean season, there fell in England a heavy case, and a common; howbeit, it was right piteous for

* It has been denied that Philippa was with the English army at the battle of Neville's Cross; and indeed it has never been asserted that she personally engaged in it.

the King, his children, and all his realm; for, the good Queen of England, that so many good deeds had done in her time, and so many knights succoured, and damsels comforted, and had so largely departed of her goods to her people, and naturally loved always the nation of Hainault, the country where she was born,— she fell sick in the castle of Windsor, the which sickness continued on her so long that there was with her no remedy but death. And the good lady, when she knew and perceived that there was with her no remedy but death, she desired to speak with the king her husband; and, when he was before her, she put out of her bed her right hand, and took the king by his right hand, who was right sorrowful at his heart. Then she said, 'Sir, we have in peace, joy, and great prosperity, used our time together: Sir, now I pray you, at our departing, that you will grant me three desires.' The king, right sorrowfully weeping, said, 'Madam, desire what you will, I grant it.' 'Sir,' said she, 'I require you, first of all, that all manner of people, such as I have dealt withal in their merchandise, on this side the sea, or beyond, that it may please you to pay everything I owe to them or to any other. And, secondly, Sir, all such ordinance and promises as I have made to the churches, as well of this country as beyond the sea, where I have had my devotion, that it may please you to accomplish and fulfil the same. Thirdly, Sir, I require you that it may please you to take no other sepulture, whensoever it shall please God to call you out of this transitory

life, but beside me in Westminster.' The king, all weeping, said, 'Madam, I grant all your desires.' Then the good lady and queen made on her the sign of the cross, and commended the king her husband to God, and her youngest son Thomas, who was there beside her. And, anon after, she yielded up the spirit, the which I believe surely the holy angels received with great joy up to heaven; for, in all her life, she did, neither in thought nor deed, thing whereby to lose her soul, as far as any creature could know. Thus the good Queen of England died, in the year of our Lord 1369, on the vigil of our Lady, in the midst of August."

After the death of Queen Philippa, Froissart returned into his own country, where he procured the living of Lestines. The account which he has left of his ministry, is eminently characteristic: he tells us that, during the short time he was rector of Lestines, the tavern-keepers of that place received upwards of five hundred francs of his money. This smacks exceedingly of the young gentleman whose ears 'quickened' at the emphatic sound of the drawing a cork.

He next became attached to the service of Wenceslaus of Luxembourg, Duke of Brabant—whose secretary, also, it is probable that he was. The duke had a taste for poetry; and engaged Froissart in making a collection of his compositions: these Froissart interlarded with some pieces of his own, and formed the whole into a kind of Romance entitled, Meliador, or the Knight of the Golden Sun. It is of this book that such worthy

mention is made in the following Story: for Froissart read aloud, out of it, every night to Gaston de Foix, after supper; who would not allow a word to be spoken during the reading, such "great solace" did he take in hearing these compositions. I cannot but think that this oil of flattery to the poet's self-love tended to heal the wounds in Gaston's own fame, which a just appreciation of his demerits by the chronicler would infallibly have made.

During these years, it is probable that Froissart continued his historical labours; for we find that, under letters sealed on the 12th December, 1381, the Duke of Anjou had fifty-six quires of the Chronicle of Froissart, rector of the parish church of Lestines, seized; which he had sent to have illuminated, previously to their transmission to the King of England, the enemy of France.

Wenceslaus, Duke of Brabant, died in 1384; and Froissart, ever the favourite of the great, very shortly afterwards was taken into the service of Guy of Chatillon, Count of Blois; at whose desire and expense, he recommenced his history. In the researches consequent upon this, he made the visit to the Court of the Count of Foix, which forms the subject of the following story; and which it is unnecessary here to dwell upon, as the incidents, during its course, are therein detailed at length, in his own language.

It is with this renewal of his Chronicles, at the request of the Count of Blois, that the difference of tone, to which I have alluded at the beginning of this paper,

commences. I shall here copy from the "Essay on the Works of Froissart," by M. de la Curne de Ste. Palaye, the conclusions to which he has come as to these divisions: only premising that, after investigating the point with some diligence, I am led to coincide perfectly in the opinions which that eminent antiquarian expresses:—

"The history of Froissart is divided into four books, or volumes, as well in all the manuscripts as in all the printed editions. The first begins with the coronation of Edward III. King of England, in 1326, and with the accession of Philip de Valois to the crown of France in 1328; and closes with the year 1379, inclusivly.

"Froissart begins his second volume with the last three years of the preceding volume, and with more detail; having gained fuller information than when he first wrote it. He continues it until the peace of the Men of Ghent with the Duke of Burgundy, the treaty of which is in the last chapter but one of this volume, dated the 18th December, 1385.

"The third volume goes back as far as the year 1382, inclusively; reciting several events which had been mentioned in the second from the ninety-third chapter, until the end. The events of these four last years, which had been already related, are so much expanded in the third volume, that they occupy the twenty-nine first chapters. The rest is employed in the history of the following years, until 1389, ending with the truce concluded for three years between France and England, and with the preparations that

were making for the entry of the Queen Isabel of Bavaria into Paris, of which the author promises to speak hereafter.

"The fourth volume begins with a recital of all the feasts and magnificences which were made for this entry, and ends with the dethroning and death of Richard II., King of England, in 1400, and with the election which was made the same year of Robert, Emperor of Germany. These events terminate the two last chapters of the whole work.

* * * "The four volumes of the history of Froissart are each subdivided into a great number of chapters, which are differently placed according to the different manuscripts and printed copies; but, besides these divisions, in a great many manuscripts there is one which is particular to the first volume. Some have four books, or parts, others six, and some eight. * * *

"It is in one of these four, six, or eight divisions of the first volume that one must seek for the termination of that part of his history which Froissart carried to England, and presented to Queen Philippa of Hainault. * * * *

"The principal of these divisions, that which divides the history of Froissart into four volumes, serves to mark as many different epochas, at which he stopped in the course of his work; whether from want of materials, having carried narration to the time of his writing; or whether he wished to take some repose himself, and allow the same to his readers: * * *

"The first volume of Froissart comprehends, as I have said before, the history from 1326 to 1379. This period includes the time of his journey to England, when one may readily suppose he had discontinued the work; for, he considered it then as being finished to that part, since, he says, he carried it to England, where he presented it to the queen. It ends about the year 1360. * * * A sort of connection, which I find between several chapters of the remainder of this first volume, of which the first announces others at a great distance, convinces me that the remainder was composed off-hand, and without interruption: and that, consequently, the author only began to write it towards the year 1379, since he closes it with the account of the events of this same year. * * *

"No material interruption is met with in the course of the second volume. The author employs the twenty-seven first chapters in recapitulating the events of the three last years of the preceding volume, which had been too succinctly narrated. * * * After these twenty-seven chapters, he resumes the thread of his history, which he follows until the peace which the Men of Ghent obtained from the Duke of Burgundy in 1385.

"It is towards the year 1385, or 1386, that Froissart began to write his second volume: it was finished in 1388. This same year he visited the Count of Foix. * * *

"The author began his third volume in 1390. He wrote it by order, and at the expense, of the Count of

Blois. * * * This volume, which returns to those events that had happened since 1382, and which gives a fuller account of them, was begun in 1390, and was already finished in 1392. * * * 'This whole volume seems to me to have been composed without interruption; at least, there is a material connexion between several chapters at a great distance from each other.

"The interval there is between the third and fourth volumes seems to have been caused more to give repose to the reader than to the historian; for Froissart, in ending the third, announces the events which are to be the materials of the fourth volume. I believe the historian, immediately on completing the third, wrote the fifty first chapters of the fourth volume, which close with the events of 1392.

"A great number of the manuscripts, and black-letter editions, which only begin the fourth volume after these fifty chapters, form a very natural prejudice in favour of this opinion: besides, from the year 1392, when they end, two years passed in continual negotiations between the French and English; during which several truces, but of short duration, were made; which, however, ended at last in a peace, or truce, for four years. One cannot doubt but that Froissart then interrupted his writing; since that was the time he performed his journey into England, where he resided three months. I believe this interval was considerable, because the remainder of the fourth volume, which seems to me to have been written without intermission,

was not composed, if I mistake not, until several years after this journey; that is to say, towards the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. One finds in it those events which belong to the years 1399 and 1400. I find nothing that may lead us to form any judgment how long a time the author employed on this last part."

Bearing this outline in mind, the reader will be assisted in following the stories he will find in the present volume. At the Court of Gaston de Foix, Froissart, like Don Quixote at the Duke's, is constantly reminded of such and such passages of his former history. The Count receives him with eminent favour and distinction; and knights and squires are eager to give him every information, in the hope of being duly commemorated in the continuation of his Chronicles. Indeed Froissart himself seems sufficiently to appreciate the power of conferring immortality which was vested in his hands; for of that of his Chronicles, he never doubts for one moment.

In the third book it is that he gives the account of his visit to the Count de Foix's court; and he makes that visit the *cadre* of all the historical information which he records therein. Hence those latter books appear to me, as I have already hinted, more in the light of historical memoirs than of history itself. He does not relate the events, as they occur, in an independent and consecutive narrative; but he details the conversations which he held with the many persons of eminence and experience whom he met at Orthez; and

thus gives the history of several years, between his arrival at the Count's court towards the end of November 1388, and his departure from it about the Easter following. He indulges in more minute descriptions than in the former volumes of more severe history; and hence, as a picture of manners, the later books are the more valuable and interesting.

Froissart left Orthez in the suite of the young Countess of Boulogne, who went as the bride of the Duke of Berri, uncle of Charles VI.—as the reader will find detailed in the following story. They went by way of Avignon, to see the Pope, Clement VII. who was a kinsman of the young Duchess.* During his stay there, Froissart was robbed; an event which he laments in a long ditty into which he inserts many particulars of his life.

In the later journies of which I have spoken, Froissart's equipage was considerably changed from the humble one with which he visited Scotland; he was always richly clothed, and well mounted, and followed by a servant, upon a hackney, who carried his valise. He was, according to his own description, a man of expensive and luxurious habits; indeed, his almost continual journeys for many years; his living among kings and nobles; together with the tastes rehearsed at the outset of this Memoir, could not fail to drain a purse even replenished as often as his was, by the liberality of the rich and great.

After this period, Froissart seems to have been in

* See Frontispiece,

constant motion for two or three years. From Avignon, he went into Auvergne, where he was present at the nuptials of the Duke of Berri, and composed a pastoral upon the occasion. From thence, he went with the Lord de la Rivière to Paris. He then accompanied the Lord de Coucy into the Cambresis, to the castle of Crevecœur, who had just had it given to him by the King. From him, Froissart learned various particulars of the negotiations between France and England. He next passes a fortnight in his own country (Hainault), and a month in Holland, with his patron, the Count of Blois, to whom he relates the history of his travels. He goes to Lelinghen, to acquire information concerning the negotiations there carrying on. Thence, he returns to Paris, and witnesses the magnificent entry of Isabel of Bavaria—with a very detailed description of which, he opens his fourth book. After this, it would appear, that he returned to Avignon; for he describes with great minuteness the particulars of the interview of Charles VI. with the Pope; which occurred in the same progress on which the King received the homage of Gaston de Foix, at Thoulouse; at which ceremony Froissart distinctly states himself to have been present. Nothing, indeed, can exceed his activity during this period. At every congress, at every festival, at every pageant, military or religious, Froissart is there. Such constant intercourse as this, with the most figuring persons of the age, must have peculiarly fitted him to be the recorder of their actions. Unlike the monkish chroniclers of an earlier period, he

is a man of the world, who understands the social and conventional position and relations of the persons of whom he treats; and attaches to deeds, words, and men their real and practical signification. Neither is he politically attached to any individual, or to any faction. His connections were of a nature free from party-spirit, and were alternately formed with those of every side of the question; by which means he was likely to acquire general knowledge, and common impartiality; at the same time, that he was free from the feelings attending political apostacy.

His impartiality, indeed, appears to have been, for the most part, singularly conscientious. For, not content with using uprightly the information he possessed,—he considered it to be his moral duty as an historian to gather the accounts of every side of every topic concerning which he wrote. Accordingly, when about the year 1390, he had sat down in his own country to compile his history from the materials which he had so diligently amassed,—he seems to have been stricken in conscience, when he came to write on the wars of Castile, with having received his information only from Spaniards, and Gascons, who were their allies. He was desirous of having Portuguese authority also for his narrative; and, hearing that several of that country were at Bruges, he went thither to gather their account of the transactions in question. At Bruges, he learns that a Portuguese knight, "a valiant and wise man, and of the Council of the King of Portugal," has just arrived at Middle-

burgh in Zealand, on his way to Prussia to join in the war against the Turks. This knight, whose name was Juan Fernando Portelet, had been in all the Portuguese wars; and received Froissart, who instantly went from Bruges to Middleburgh to converse with him, with great urbanity and openness. He furnishes the chronicler with ample information on the subject of these wars; and Froissart, whose delight at gaining this additional authority is most vividly expressed, returns to his country to finish his book. This forms the third of his complete work.

About the year 1378, Froissart had obtained from Clement VII.* the reversion of a canonry at Lisle. But Clement dying in 1394, before this reversion had been converted into possession, Froissart gave up all hopes of ever obtaining it; and ceased to style himself 'Canon of Lisle,' which he previously had done in several places of his writings. After this time, he calls himself "Canon and Treasurer of the Collegiate Church of Chimay," which M. de Ste. Palaye supposes he obtained through the means of the Count of Blois, his constant friend and patron, to whom the lordship of Chimay belonged.

A truce of four years having, in 1393, been concluded between France and England, Froissart determined to revisit the latter country, where he had not been for seven-and-twenty years. He went thither in 1395; and his account of his residence there is so characteristic both of himself, and of the court of Richard

* See Note [11] to Gaston de Foix; on the Great Schism.

II. and the manners of the times generally, that, though the passage is long, I am tempted to give it in his own words:—

"True it was, that I, Sir John Froissart (as at that time treasurer and canon of Chimay, in the county of Hainault, in the diocese of Liege) had great affection to go and see the realm of England —when I had been in Abbeville, and saw that truce was taken between the realms of France and England, to endure four years by sea and land. Many reasons moved me to make that voyage. One was because, in my youth, I had been brought up in the court of the noble King Edward III. and Queen Philippa, his wife, and among their children, and other barons of England that were, as then, alive, in whom I found all nobleness, honour, largess, and courtesy. Therefore, I desired to see the country, thinking thereby I should live much the longer, for I had not been there twenty-seven years before; and I thought, though I saw not those lords that I left alive there, that, at the least, I should see their heirs, the which should do me much good to see, and also to justify the histories and matters that I had written of them.

"For these causes and others, I had great desire to go into England to see King Richard, who was son to the noble Prince of Wales and of Acquitaine; for I had not seen this King Richard since he was christened in the cathedral church at Bourdeaux, at which time I was there. And, ere I took my journey, I had engrossed in a fair book, well illumined, all the matters

of amours and moralities that in four-and-twenty years before I had made and composed. And I had this said fair book well covered with velvet, and garnished with clasps of silver and gilt, thereof to make a present to the king, at my first coming to his presence. I had such desire to go this voyage that the pain and travail grieved me nothing. Thus, provided of horses and other necessaries, I passed the sea at Calais, and came to Dover, the 12th day of the month of July. When I came there, I found no man of my knowledge, it was so long since I had been in England: and the houses were all newly changed, and young children were become men, and the women knew me not, nor I them. So I abode half a day and all a night at Dover. It was on a Tuesday; and the next day, by nine of the clock, I came to Canterbury, to St. Thomas's shrine, and to the tomb of the noble Prince of Wales, who is there interred right richly. There I heard mass, and made my offering to the holy saint. And there I was informed how King Richard should be there the next day on pilgrimage, which was after his return out of Ireland, where he had been the space of nine months or thereabouts. The king had a devotion to visit St. Thomas's shrine, also, because the prince, his father, was there buried. And I thought to abide the king there; and so I did.

"And the next day, the king came thither, with a noble company of lords, ladies, and damsels. And when I was among them, they seemed to me all new folks. I knew no person. The time was sore changed

in twenty-eight years. And with the king, as then, was none of his uncles; the Duke of Lancaster was in Acquitaine, and the Dukes of York and Gloucester on other businesses: so that I was at the first all abashed. For, if I had seen any ancient knight that had been with King Edward, or with the Prince, I had been well recomforted—but I could see none such. Then, I demanded for a knight called Sir Richard Stacy, whether he were alive or not. And it was shewed me 'Yes'—but he was at London. Then I thought use to go to the Lord Thomas Percy, great senechall of England, who was there with the king: so I acquainted me with him, and I found him right honourable and gracious. And he offered to present me and my letters to the king, whereof I was right joyful; for it behoved me to have some means to bring me to the presence of such a prince as the King of England was. He went to the king's chamber, at which time the king was gone to sleep; and so he shewed me; and bade me return to my lodging, and come again. And so I did; and when I came to the bishop's palace, I found the Lord Thomas Percy ready to ride to Ospringe; and he counselled me to make, as then, no knowledge of my being there, but to follow the Court. And he said he would cause me ever to be well lodged till the king should be at the fair castle of Leeds in Kent.

"I ordered me after his counsel, and rode before to Ospringe. And, by adventure, I was lodged in an house where was lodged a gentle knight of England,

called Sir William Lisle. He had tarried there behind the king, because he had pain in his head all the night before. He was one of the king's privy chamber; and when he saw that I was a stranger, and, as he thought, of the marches of France, because of my language, we fell in acquaintance together. For the gentlemen of England are courteous, treatable, and glad of acquaintance. Then he demanded what I was, and what business I had to do in those parts. I shewed him a great part of my coming thither, and all that the Lord Thomas Percy had said to me, and ordered me to do. He then answered me and said how I could not have a better man, and that, on the Friday, the king should be at the castle of Leeds. And he shewed me that when I came there, I should find there the Duke of York, the king's uncle; whereof I was right glad, because I had letters directed to him;—also that in his youth he had seen me in the court of the noble King Edward, his father, and the Queen, his mother.

"Then, on the Friday, in the morning, Sir William Lisle and I rode together; and thus we rode to Leeds; and thither came the king and all his company. And there I found the Lord Edmund, Duke of York. Then I went to him, I delivered my letters from the Count of Hainault, his cousin, and from the Count of Ostrevant. The duke received me well, and made me good cheer, and said—'Sir John, hold you always near to us, and we shall shew you love and courtesy: we are bound

thereto for the love of time past, and for love of my lady the old Queen my mother, in whose court you were; we have good remembrance thereof.' Then I thanked him, as reason required. So I was advanced, by reason of him and Sir Thomas Percy, and Sir William Lisle; by their means I was brought into the king's chamber, and into his presence by means of his uncle, the Duke of York. Then I delivered my letters to the king, and he took and read them at good leisure. Then he said to me that I was welcome, as one that had been and is of the English court. As on that day, I shewed not the king the book I had brought for him; he was so sore occupied with great affairs that I had, as then, no leisure to present my book. And to have counsel of these great matters*, the king had sent for the most part of the prelates and lords of England to be at the feast of Magdalentide, at a manor of the king's, called Eltham, a seven English miles from London. And when they had tarried at Leeds four days, the king returned to Rochester, and so to Eltham, and so I rode forth in the king's company."

On the road, Froissart, as usual, drains his companions of all the news he can extract from them; and gives a detailed account of the expedition into Ireland, and of the politics of the English court at that period. He does not, however, forget the "fair book." After

* His second marriage with the King of France's daughter Isabel; and the appeal of the Gascon lords against the grant of Acquitaine to the Duke of Lancaster.

remaining some days at Eltham, he says, "On the Sundays following, all such as had been there were departed, and all their counsellors, except the Duke of York, who abode still about the king; and Sir Thomas Percy and Sir Richard Stacey shewed my business to the king. Then the king desired to see my book that I had brought for him; so he saw it in his chamber, for I had laid it there, ready on his bed. When the king opened it, it pleased him well, for it was fair illumined and written, and covered with crimson velvet, with ten buttons of silver and gilt, and roses of gold in the midst, with two clasps gilt, richly wrought. Then the king demanded of me whereof it treated, and I shewed him how it treated of matters of love; whereof the king was glad. And he looked into it, and read it in many places; for he could speak and read French very well. And he gave it to a knight of his chamber, named Sir Richard Creadon, to bear it into his secret chamber.

"Thus I tarried in the King of England's court, as long as it pleased me; not always in one place; for the king oftentimes removed to Eltham, to Leeds, to Kingston, to Sheen, to Chertsey, or to Windsor, about the marches of London."

After his last return from England, Froissart retired to his chapter at Chimay, where he composed the fourth and last book of his Chronicles. Under the year 1397, he mentions the death of his patron Guy of Blois; and the whole concludes with the death of Richard II. in the year 1400. How long

Froissart lived after this is uncertain; but I should think it probable that it was no great length of time—for so busy a spirit would scarcely have been stilled but by death. I should not think it likely that he would cease to write long before he ceased to live. The year of his death, however, is not known—although the month is, viz. October; which is mentioned in the obituary of the collegiate church of St. Monegunda at Chimay. I transcribe from M. de Ste. Palaye the extract containing the "obit" of Froissart, which he copies "from a manuscript taken from the archives of the chapter of St. Monegunda at Chimay, in which are found the obits, and pious foundations made to this chapter, and other antiquities:"—

"The obit of Sir John Froissard, born at Valenciennes, Canon and Treasury of the aforesaid Church, which flourished in 1364, may have place here, according to his quality, as having been domestic chaplain to the renowned Guy of Chatillon, Count of Soison and of Blois, Lord of Avesnes, Chimay, and Beaumont, &c. who has also been a very celebrated historiographer of his time, and has written the wars and Chronicles, and the most remarkable events from the year 1335 until the year 1400; according as he himself relates, in divers parts of his history; and, more especially, in the fifty-first chapter of his fourth book, and as it is shewn in the eulogium written in his praise. in the following words:—

Cognita Romanæ vix esset gloria gentis,
Pluribus hunc scriptis nî decorasset honos.

Tanti nempe refert totum scripsisse per orbem,
Quælibet et doctos sæcla tulisse viros.
Commemorent alios alii, super æthera tollam
Froissardum, historiæ per sua sæcla ducem ;
Scripsit enim historiam magc, sexaginta per annos,
Totius mundi, quæ memoranda notat ;
Scripsit et Anglorum Reginæ gesta Philippæ,
Qui, Gulielme, tuo tutia juncta toro.

HONORARIUM.

Gallorum sublimis honos et fama tuorum,
Hic, Froissarde, jaces, si modo forte jaces.
Historiæ vivus studuisti reddere vitam,
Defuncto vitam reddet at illa tibi.

"JOANNES FROISSARDUS, Canonicus et Thesaurarius Ecclesiæ Collegiatæ Sanctæ Monegundis Simaci, vetutissimo ferme totius Belgii oppido.

Proxima dum propriis florebit Francia scriptis,
Fania,* dum ramos, Blancaque † fundit aquas.
Urbis ut hujus honos, templi sic fama vigebis
Teque ducem historiæ Gallia tota colet,
Belgica tota colet, Cymeaque vallis amabit
Dum rapidus proprios Scaldis obibit agros."

The reader has now before him a connected outline of the life of Froissart, and can duly estimate his qualities both good and evil. The latter, indeed, appear to have been rather errors and indulgences than positive vices, or they become so only in consequence of his profession. On the other hand, his talents and accomplishments—his extreme cheerfulness

* The Faigne de Chimay, a small forest dependent on it.
† La Blanche Eau, a river which runs by Chimay.

and goodnature—his sense of justice and duty as an historian—his gratitude to his friends, and his courtesy towards every one—are strictly merits of his own, not only not arising from, but mostly in contradistinction to, the general tone and spirit of his age. The instances in which that spirit operated disadvantageously upon him I have already noted with censure; it is, therefore, but just that I should give him his merited praise.

It is impossible, indeed, to turn over his volumes, and trace him through the course of his stirring and romantic life, without, at the close, entertaining towards him feelings of great kindliness; perhaps not mingled with any very deep respect, but the more in consonance, probably, with his own character, though of an order less exalted, in consequence of this very want.

But, in another point of view, the pages of Froissart afford subject for the weightiest reflection and speculation. They are the great mirror of the fourteenth century; the age generally throughout Europe of Chivalry and the Feudal System at their zenith;—and, with reference to our own country, the period when the roots were cast of that national hatred of France, which has operated so powerfully upon our character and our history, from that time to this. I shall bestow a few observations on both these subjects.

Chivalry, as it is painted by poets and romancers, bears, it must be confessed, an aspect sufficiently attractive and picturesque. But I cannot but consider this as a fancy-piece, not a portrait; at least I

have never been able to find its original in history. At the best, it can be regarded only as an Utopian theory, never reduced—if, indeed, it were reducible—to practice. For a moment, however, I will grant the practical existence of the *beau* truly *idéal* of knighthood. And this appears to me to lead to a conclusion, which I do not recollect to have seen drawn in the discussions I have met with on the subject. The virtues of chivalry, at their height, never could be called forth except in a state of the utmost misery to the bulk of mankind. The relief of "distressed damsels," or, to speak in reasonable language, of women exposed to outrage and oppression—the righting of the wronged—the protecting of the weak against injustice, the defenceless against rapine and murder,—these deeds to be erected into the ordinary, yet private and irresponsible, occupation of a large and dominant class of society, argues a preposterous existence of violence, cruelty, and bloodshed on the one hand—of grinding poverty, outraged feelings, and total insecurity of life and limb, house and home, on the other.

Alas! that such evils did exist, the whole course of the middle ages proves but too plainly. But so far from their being in any degree redressed by the professors of chivalry, they were chiefly, if not entirely, inflicted by them. I shall not leave these facts to this general assertion; but I shall give, from Froissart himself, details from various portions of his history, to prove the outrages practised by the knights, and

the miseries suffered by the people. It is to be borne in mind that Froissart never dilates upon such matters; they seem to him natural and ordinary; and he merely states their occurrence as part of the regular events of the campaign.

I shall begin with the exploits of Edward III. on his progress through Normandy, previously to the battle of Crecy. It will be recollected that, on his own shewing, Edward had not the shadow of a claim to the crown of France. The monstrous injustice of the cause renders the iniquities committed in its prosecution doubly guilty. I find that, in the notice of the English power in Acquitaine, in the first volume, I have said that of the earlier part of these wars the English are "highly and deservedly proud." * I beg to be understood to have there used the word "deservedly," *strictly* as applied to the military achievements of the period, and I regret that the turn of expression should be open to the possibility of doubt †. For, so far from considering that portion of our history matter justly worthy of pride—it has long appeared to me, that if our French wars from Edward III.'s reign, to Henry VI.'s, could be wholly expunged from our annals, we should get rid of a load of guilt, for which their glory is no payment. Nay, whatever glory we had in gaining our ground in France, was wrested from us, as we lost it. Unjust war is always of deep guilt; what then is it

* Vol. I. p. 22.

† The sheet is printed off, so as to render alteration impossible.

when carried on ferociously! How unjust this war was, the reader has already seen—of the spirit in which it was conducted, the following, which is taken from the first portion of Froissart's history, will suffice, I think, as a sample. It is to be remembered, that this part of his work was presented by himself to Queen Philippa, and that, therefore, the worthy canon would take exceeding good care not to set forth therein anything which could be considered strongly condemnatory of her royal husband. But such things were *not* then so considered! The following is part of the narrative of the king's proceedings, on his first landing in Normandy—where there was no army to oppose him :—

"Thus they set forth as they were ordained; and they that went by the sea took all the ships that they found in their way. And so long they went forth, what by sea and what by land, that they came to a good town and good port called Barfleur, the which, incontinent, was won, for they within gave up for fear of death. Howbeit, for all that, the town was robbed, and much gold and silver there found, and rich jewels. There was found so much riches, that the boys and villains of the host set nothing by good furred gowns." . . . . "After the town of Barfleur was thus taken and robbed without burning, then they spread abroad into the country, and did what they list, for there was nought to resist them. At last they came to a great and a rich town called Cherbourg: the town they won and robbed it—and burnt part thereof." . . . . "Then they

passed forth and came to Mountbourgue, and took it, and robbed it, and burned it clean. In this manner they burned many other towns in that country, and won so much riches that it was a marvel to reckon it." These and other such doings of the division of the army which went along the coast, are thus jauntily related by Froissart, without the very least expression of blame.

Meanwhile, the king sent out a sort of flying battalion, under Lord Godfrey, the marshal, to lay the country waste, coming back to the main body at night. "The Lord Godfrey, as marshal, rode forth with five hundred men at arms, and rode off from the king's battéle a six or seven leagues, in burning and *exilying* (laying waste to) the country, the which was plentiful of everything: the granges full of corn, the houses full of all riches, rich burgesses, carts and chariots, horse, swine, muttons, and other beasts; they took what they list, and brought into the king's host." The chapter following the above begins with these memorable words:—"Thus by the Englishmen was burnt, exyled, robbed, wasted, and pillaged, the good plentiful country of Normandy." Nothing can be more characteristic, both of the times and of Froissart, than this. He narrates circumstances—which, if they were paused on in detail, would make the flesh creep—in the pretty, gentle, general manner we have seen, without one word to prove that he does not consider them very virtuous actions. Here a large army lands in a country wholly unprotected. Edward comes, announcing himself lawful king of that country—so that,

of course, his only object should be to drive out the person whom he would designate as an usurper. And for this object he suffers his troops to lay waste the whole district, robbing the inhabitants of all their goods, burning their houses over their heads, and thrusting them on board their ships, for fear they should become rebels if left behind! Truly, this was an amiable method of proving to the French people the benefits likely to accrue from the paternal government of Edward Plantagenet.

From Froissart's mode of expression, an ordinary reader would not deduce half the miseries which befell these miserable people of Normandy. Saying, in broad terms, that a town, or a district, was exyled, pylled, or even brent,* sounds light in comparison with the woes which do arise from a brutal and unbridled soldiery being "let slip," with the cry of "havoc!" to excite their odious yet terrible fury, upon the peaceful inhabitants of a peaceful town. It is needless, I am sure, for me to draw any detailed description of the scenes which must then have taken place. I *could* not do it, without making my book unfit to be generally read. With their attention thus drawn to it, my readers will sufficiently feel what such a state of things must have been, which the careless wholesale terms of Froissart may scarcely have given to their view, in its real degree of horror.

It was to put a stop to, and punish, these outrages, that Philip de Valois raised the splendid army which

* Laid waste—pillaged—burned.

was destroyed at Crecy. Of the fighting of that battle we have just cause to be proud, *merely as regards our conduct in the conflict;* but it would be better for the real fame of England, if the name of a victory won in such a cause as that of Edward's claim upon France, and fought after a campaign of the robbery and destruction of defenceless people, such as that of which I have just spoken, were never again breathed. And yet, from our cradle, we are taught to chant the praises of "our Edwards and Henries"!

I do not mean to impute any peculiar cruelty to Edward III. Such—and this awfully adds to its horror—was the general mode of action of the time. These were the *practices* in which the principle of Chivalry found vent!

I am loth to dwell upon matters so painful, but I cannot omit the account of the horrors committed in Limoges, on its re-capture by the Black Prince. It is true he had great cause for displeasure. He had trusted the Bishop exceedingly, and he and the chief men of the town had delivered up the place to the French. "The Commons" had done nothing; but, in those days of Chivalry, they were always included in the punishments of their superiors, though never in their benefits or rewards. The following is Froissart's account;—and here the worthy canon *is* rather touched, and speaks in a tone of humanity:—

"Then the prince, the Duke of Lancaster, the Earl of Cambridge, the Earl of Pembroke, Sir Guischard Dangle, and all the other with their companies, en-

tered into the city, and all other foot-men ready apparelled to do evil, and to pillage and rob the city, *and to slay, men, women, and children, for so it was commanded them to do.* It was great pity to see the men, women, and children, that kneeled down on their knees before the prince for mercy; but he was so inflamed with ire, that he took no heed to them, so that none were heard, but all put to death, as they were met withal, and such as were nothing culpable. There was no pity taken of the poor people who wrought never no manner of treason, yet bought it dearer than the great personages such as done the evil and the trespass. There was not so hard a heart within the city of Limoges, an if he had any remembrance of God, but that wept piteously for the great mischief that they saw before their eyes. For more than three thousand men, women, and children were slain and beheaded that day: God have mercy on their souls, for I trow they were martyrs."

It is impossible, I think, to read this without shuddering. And these are the times, and this is the system, we are bidden to admire! Horrible! I could cite numberless instances of devastations of the dreadful nature of those which I have quoted above; but I am unwilling to overload my page with horrors. These may serve as a sample of cruelty and ferocity; I will now proceed to an instance which occurred in a later part of the war, in which "cruelty," combined with my third ingredient "treachery," shone conspicuous.

Froissart's narrative is spread over some space; I shall therefore condense it in my own words.

Sir Robert Knolles, one of the most distinguished followers of the Black Prince, had become personally possessed of a considerable castle and its dependencies, in Britanny, called Derval. When the war was renewed in the reign of Richard II., some of the severest fighting was again in unhappy Britanny. To besiege this castle came the Constable of France, (Du Guesclin)—Clisson, after him, probably, the most distinguished French knight in these later wars, and who became his successor,—and several other leaders distinguished for rank and prowess. Sir Robert Knolles was at this time absent from the fortress, which he had left in charge with Sir Hugh Brock. Sir Hugh was a gallant knight, and a skilful leader; and finding himself, after a long and brave defence, reduced almost to extremity, he entered into a treaty with the French, of a nature very common in those wars—namely, that if they were not relieved by the Duke of Britanny, or some other, with sufficient force to raise the siege, within two months, they would surrender. And it was further stipulated, that, if those succours did arrive, they must raise the siege without aid from the garrison—and that no additional aid whatever should be received within the fortress. In conformity with this treaty, Sir Hugh Brock gave up "certain gentlemen, knights, and squires, for hostages in that behalf."

Sir Robert Knolles was, in the meantime, at Brest;

which itself was besieged and hardly pressed; and he entered into a somewhat similar composition with the Constable. He was relieved within the date fixed, yet would not Du Guesclin deliver up the hostages, but carried them off prisoners. Faith, indeed, was so little kept by these chivalrous persons, who nearly always sought some paltry quibble or other whereby to escape their engagements, that being hostage must have been a service of most peculiar danger. Sir Robert Knolles had no sooner put Brest into a state of good defence, than he came to his own castle of Derval—declared that his officers had exceeded their power in forming the treaty, and flung defiance in the teeth of the Duke of Anjou, who had succeeded the Constable in the command of the siege.

At this the duke expressed great indignation; said the time was passed at which the castle was to have been delivered up, and that, unless it were, he would put the hostages to death. Sir Robert Knolles declared that, without him or his permission, his men had no right to make the treaty,—that, therefore it was null, and he would not resign the castle,—and that if the Duke of Anjou touched the hostages, he would retaliate upon divers French knights and squires whom he had prisoners.

The Duke of Anjou had some personal claims upon this castle of Derval: the English commander held it as his own. What, therefore, could the lives of some half dozen knights and squires signify in comparison with this! Each was " resolute," and, heaven knows,

each was "bloody." The castle was not yielded—the hostages had their heads cut off, before the castle walls, and the French prisoners underwent the same infliction on a board thrust forth from one of the castle windows! The utter disregard of the lives of their brothers-in-arms, evinced throughout the whole transaction, is something quite startling. Sir Robert Knolles's answer to the Duke of Anjou's herald really would almost seem to carry with it the impression that hostages were *things*, not beings. "Sir," says the herald, "know for truth that, without ye yield up the castle, your hostages shall be beheaded." Sir Robert answered, "By God, herald, for all the managing of your masters, I will not so lose my castle; for, if so be that the Duke cause my men to die, I shall serve him in like case; for I have here, within, both knights and squires prisoners, and though I might have for them an hundred thousand franks, I will save never a one of them." Really, this phraseology is matchless! "I will serve *him* in the like case." Serve whom? the Duke of Anjou?—No—he is beyond your grasp—but how do you serve your faithful friends, who are lying in danger, as the pledges of your unredeemed faith, or that of your lieutenant, which you will not allow him to redeem? You slay four other innocent men to avenge the deaths of these three! This cannot but recal the celebrated remonstrance of the emissary whom Wolsey wanted to persuade to go on a dangerous mission, by the assurance, that if but a hair of his were touched, a hundred heads should

fall—"Alas!" answered the wary diplomatist, "not one of them would fit my shoulders."

It is quite clear that Sir Robert Knolles was in the wrong on the point in dispute. An officer left in command of a fortress liable to siege, must have, and always has and had, discretion to make capitulations. How could Sir Hugh Brock send all the way to Brest, where Sir Robert Knolles himself was undergoing siege? Moreover the castle had had the benefit of the treaty; for, if the French had not forborne in consequence, it would have been taken long before.

But the point which makes this case so very dreadful, is the idea which one cannot repel from the mind, that matters would not have been pushed to this awful extremity, if it had not been that both besieger and besieged had a personal interest in the castle contended for. "I will *not so lose my castle*," quoth Sir Robert. That this extreme severity was not universal, is proved in the event immediately preceding. Du Guesclin made some absurd pretence about Brest not being fairly rescued—when, in point of fact, Lord Salisbury's relieving force was so strong, that he dare not come down and oppose it; and he therefore kept the hostages, but he did not put them to death. Of course, they would be ultimately ransomed. But this was only robbery—not murder.

Such was the faith of the brightest ornaments of chivalry of those days—when their own interest was in one scale, and the lives of their brethren in arms in

the other. Truly, they deserve the epithets of generous and noble! For a matter of self-interest, troth-plight is broken, and friends are devoted to the axe!

But of instances of what perhaps may be thought a meaner treachery, the plenty is such, that the only difficulty is where to choose. This very Louis of Anjou, who figures in the foregoing anecdote, not content with pillaging the provinces over which he was appointed to govern, to an extent which actually caused the complaints to reach the ears of his brother on the throne; but being adopted by Joan of Naples about the period of that brother's death, took advantage of his short regency of France to exact enormous taxes, every penny of which he took with him to Naples. Nay more—he actually *stole* the jewels and treasure which Charles V. had left at Melun.

This, I think, is pretty well for Meanness, which I must add to my three characteristics of chivalry. The following is a crowning instance, in which the whole four are displayed either alternately or together. I allude to the Duke of Britanny *kidnapping* the Constable de Clisson,—as the *crimps* used, in the last century, to entrap people for the supply of our colonies,—and ordering him to be put to death. This order, through the forbearance of the officer who received it, was not carried into execution, and the Duke, having had time to cool, contented himself with holding de Clisson to enormous ransom; thus substituting meanness for ferocity—a pleasing alteration!

"The same season," says Froissart, "the Duke of

Britanny was making of a castle near to Vannes, called the castle of Ermyne, the which, as then, was near furnished. And, to the intent to entrap the Constable, he said unto him, and unto the Lord Delaval, and to the Lord of Beaumanoir, and to other lords that were there, 'Sirs, I require you, ere you depart, to come and see my new castle of Ermyne; ye shall see how I have devised it, and also how I purpose for to do.' They all agreed unto him, because they saw him come so lovingly among them, for they thought none evil. And so the most part of them mounted on their horses, and rode forth with the Duke to the castle of Ermyne. Then the Duke, the Constable, the Lord Delaval, the Lord Beaumanoir, and divers other lords and knights, alighted off their horses, and entered into the castle. And the Duke led the Constable by the hand, from chamber to chamber, and into every house of office; and made them drink in the cellar. Then the Duke brought them to the chief tower, and, at the door thereof, he said to the Constable, 'Sir Oliver, I know no man on this side the sea that knoweth more in building than you do. Wherefore, I pray you, mount up the stairs, and behold the building of the tower. If it be well, I am content; and, if any thing be amiss, it shall be reformed after your device.' The Constable, thinking none evil, said, 'Sir, with a right good will: please it you to go before, and I shall follow you.' 'Nay, Sir,' said the Duke, 'go your way up alone, and, in the mean time, I will talk with the Lord Delaval.' The Constable went up the stairs,

and when he was above, and past the first stage, there were men in a chamber, laid in a bushment, [in ambush,] and they opened the door, and some went down, and did shut the door beneath, and the others went up all armed to the Constable. There they took him, and led him into a chamber, and fettered him with three bolts of iron." Upon this, Froissart adds, with the utmost simplicity, "If the Constable were abashed at that time, it was no marvel." Truly, I think not.

Considering, that immediately upon knowing that the Constable was safely in hold, the Duke of Britanny issued orders that he should be put to death, which orders he, till the next day, believed to have been executed,—I believe my readers will think I have said quite enough, to bring Treachery fairly into the catalogue of chivalrous characteristics. I could cite examples *ad infinitum*, but there are perhaps few which, after this, would not be an anti-climax.

And in its boasted courtesy to women, how do we find the chivalry of this age show itself? Thirty madmen of Bretons fought thirty madmen of Englishmen, to decide which had the fairest mistress. And what are the corollaries to this? We find the Duchess of Orleans—a foreigner marrying into France—a woman who combined almost every species of merit—treated with the harshest indignity, from being accused, with a degree of injustice not short of extravagant, of crimes, all of them horrible, most of them *impossible;* we find her driven into seclusion, left, unredressed, un-

pitied, unconsoled, by the husband whom she adored—we find her, at last, dying of heart-break, from the murderer of that very husband escaping with impunity, almost with applause. We find Philip of Burgundy plundering and insulting his cousin Jacqueline of Hainault, and forcing her not to marry without his consent, which he never would give; we find Charles Durazzo smothering his kinswoman, Joan of Naples, between her pillows—and yet we are told to admire the gallantry of the age, because an indecent part of a wanton's dress has become the badge of noble knighthood!

I have not gone into these incidents in detail—for they are tolerably well known; and I have cited names of note to give a ready point for the attention to rest upon in the view of this subject I wish to present. I could readily multiply instances—but it is needless. For long-continued cold-blooded oppression, nothing can exceed the conduct of the Duke of Burgundy towards his wretched cousin. Perhaps it is worth referring to, to shew to what extent these chivalrous gallants could carry their ill-usage of women, when interest prompted. An instance somewhat similar will be found in the following Story. The other two given above speak for themselves.

Such are the facts regarding chivalry, as we find them detailed in history. What are the results? Exactly what might be supposed. The *misery of the people* was such as it is most awful to contemplate. The exactions, of all kinds, of the soldiery had become an organised system of plunder. "Pour la plu-

part," says Villaret, of a period somewhat later, "se faire guerrier or voleur de grand chemin, signifioit la même chose:"—and the remark was just as applicable in the first as in the second English wars; witness the power to which the Companions had risen, and the outrages of all kinds which they committed. Mr. Hallam, who, in his work on the Middle Ages, has not shown himself by any means prejudiced against chivalry and feudalism, bears ample testimony not only to the misery of the people, but to the tyranny and heartlessness of the nobles as its cause. The following is a note which he appends to his account of the state of France after the battle of Poitiers, and which bears so much upon my subject, that I am tempted to transcribe it *:—

"The second continuator of Nangis, a monk of no great abilities, but entitled to notice as our most contemporary historian, charges the nobility with spending the money raised upon the people by oppressive taxes, in dice, 'et alios indecentes jocos.' All the miseries that followed the battle of Poitiers he ascribes to bad government, and neglect of the commonweal; but especially to the pride and luxury of the nobles. I am aware that this writer is biassed in favour of the King of Navarre; but he was an eye-witness of the people's misery, and perhaps a less exceptionable authority than Froissart, whose love of pageantry, and habit of feasting in the castles of the great, seem to

* Hallam's Middle Ages, vol. I. chap. i. part 2.

have produced some insensibility towards the sufferings of the lower classes."

Chivalry is, above all things, distinguished for the most total and brutal disregard of persons not of noble blood or exalted rank; that is, of the almost incalculable majority of the human race. Mr. Hallam's note concludes with the following interesting testimony:— "Petrarch has drawn a lamentable picture of the state of France in 1360, when he paid a visit to Paris. 'I could not believe,' he says, 'that this was the same kingdom which I had once seen so rich and flourishing. Nothing presented itself to my eyes but a fearful solitude, an extreme poverty, lands uncultivated, houses in ruins. Even the neighbourhood of Paris manifested everywhere marks of destruction and conflagration. The streets are deserted; the roads overgrown with weeds; the whole is a vast solitude.' —Mem. de Pétrarque, t. iii. p. 541."

Alas, alas! will kings never learn that their game of war is the bane of the rest of mankind!—that what is "sport to them, is death to us." What was the object of the war, which brought such accumulated misery on so fair a portion of the globe? Was it any international quarrel? Was it any point at issue between the people of France, and the people of England? No. In those days, the people were considered only as being born to serve the great—to bleed, to suffer, to die—to endure poverty, and outrage, and wrong, for matters in which they had no concern, for persons whom they knew only by such deeds as these!

And are we to be led by any flimsy foppery about knights and dames, "the peacock and the ladies," to approve of a system whose fruits were those I have shown? Is our heart to beat high at the sound of the trumpet of chivalry, and not to feel one pang for all the humble sorrow, all the lowly wretchedness, of which that chivalry was the cause? No! I dare hope that if *these* were the facts dwelled upon, instead of being thrown into the shade, if this true substance replaced the false shadow which, in our very childhood, is held up before our eyes,—I dare hope that there is enough sober sense and right feeling in the world, to make us turn with mingled scorn and loathing from that image of chivalry, which, as in the fables of monkish superstition, is embraced, as it is seen decked in smiles and beauty, and gay and rich apparel, but which is shrunk from with a sick shudder when the *glamoury* falls from the eyes, and the disguised fiend is beheld in the nakedness of its real deformity.

It is not in a work like this that it would be fitting to discuss, at large, a matter so weighty and so intricate as the Feudal System; but I must be permitted to say a few words concerning it, as regards its influence on the period of which I have been treating. It appears to me, I confess, and I think I am borne out by history, to be a form of government peculiarly calculated to generate wars and dissensions of all kinds. Indeed, this would seem to have been worked up in the very warp and woof of the system itself. For its provisions may be said to presume, that War is the natural and

ordinary condition of mankind, and Peace the rare and comparatively insignificant exception. Nearly all the services to be rendered by the vassal to the lord are of a military nature; and they were by no means allowed to become obsolete from lack of use. The regulations, also, of this complex institution were so vague and imperfectly known, as to give rise to continual dissensions. They had a peculiar influence upon the wars of the English in France.

The quarrel of Robert of Artois with Philip de Valois arose directly from a disputed succession to a fief —and this may be said to have put the match to the train which caused this general explosion. The contest for the succession of Britanny, which gave a new turn to the war, was, again, of the same nature. Nay, the whole series of disputes which arose from the lack of male issue to the sons of Philip the Fair, tends to prove in what an extremely loose and inaccurate state the most important laws of feudal inheritance were left.

There were other anomalies and contradictions inherent to the system, some so striking and extreme, that they would be even farcical, were it not for the oppression and bloodshed they produced.

The nominal right of suzerainty, from which most of these evils sprang, existed, like nearly all rights of the period, only when might was on the same side. The Kings of Scotland did homage to the Kings of England for their Crown, when they were weak and could not help it: when they were strong, they set them at

defiance. So the Dukes of Britanny and Burgundy —so the Kings of England—to the Kings of France. And one of these quarrels, which were repeatedly recurring, cost the lives of many thousands of human beings!

The feudal system, also, was the parent and fosterer of Chivalry. As the one rose, so did the other; and they declined together also. There is little chivalry, properly so called, before the days of Hugh Capet, the maturer of the feudal tenures—unless we are to attach belief to the fables of the Paladins; and it scarcely survived the extinction of the great fiefs under Charles VIII. Modern history (*i. e.* from the termination of the Middle Ages, the end of the fifteenth century) treats but little of knighthood. The tournaments, &c., after that time, were merely "make-believe." They showed plainly the reality was not there. How well the feudal system deserves of mankind, as the propagator of such a child as Chivalry, I have already striven to show.

Above all, the feudal system was formed exclusively for the welfare of the few, to the total neglect of that of the many. The rich and nobly-born were the only persons who seem to have been recognised in the code —the poor being merely regarded as beasts of the field, whose existence was to be turned to the greatest possible advantage to their lords. Nor was this confined to the "working" of the system; terms of the most abject scorn were for ever in the mouths of the lordly, with reference to the low. Insult was lavishly added

to injury: they were ground to the earth, and then scoffed at because they were so. The wonder is that the feudal system could endure so long. But the first dawn of civilization was the date of the commencement of its decay. The moment Mind gained the power of unlimited communication, that curse was shaken in its tyrannous sway. With us, here, in England, it passed away by degrees;—but, alas! it has still left behind it remains that most hurtfully affect the tenure of real property; and, which is far worse, its odious spirit may still be traced in some of our general laws, and occasionally in their enactment and administration. In most things, however, thank heaven, it is utterly extinct. In France, its effect was much more lasting: for the exemption of the nobility from taxation, which continued up to the Revolution, cannot but be considered as the direct offshoot of feudalism. But it is now more thoroughly done away than with us: for having undergone the terrible *means* of the destruction of abuses, which the French Revolution proved, our neighbours have at least had the wisdom to take advantage of the clearance, to accomplish the *end*—viz., the establishment of sound and wise regulations in lieu of that which is gone. Their laws are now common to all France, (nearly every province before had its peculiar *feudal* customs,) and they are on the whole just, besides being clearly arranged, and easily accessible.

I shall conclude these observations upon Froissart's Times, by noticing the origin of the spirit of national

animosity between France and England, which took rise then, and which only now is on the wane—but that, I hope and believe, most rapidly.

Nowhere is this hatred more strongly to be traced than in the French writers who treat of this period. The victories of Crecy and Poitiers must, certainly, be sufficiently galling to a people so distinguished for military pride. But one would think that the length of time which has since elapsed,—the great change which has taken place both in the art of war, and in the people composing the contending parties*,—would have assuaged the extreme soreness which is displayed by some of their historians. I say more;—the glories of Du Guesclin and of Dunois ought to have proved a fully sufficient consolation for the triumphs of the Black Prince and Henry V. Indeed, for my own part, I cannot but regard the glory of the former, especially of Du Guesclin, as the more really great. Both at Poitiers and at Agincourt, and, in some measure, at Crecy also, the English army had got into a desperate *scrape*, out of which they most gallantly fought their way: but that is no excuse for their commanders having led them into it. Now the victories of Du Guesclin were part of a continued and digested system for the expulsion of the English; and though it, perhaps necessarily, was not

* France has received the addition of Britanny, Burgundy, Guienne, Gascony, &c. On the other hand, the proportion of Gascons (in the generic application of the word) in the English armies was very great—at Poitiers especially.

attended with any such brilliant achievements as our celebrated battles, it accomplished its end *thoroughly*.

The same may be said of the wars which ended in our final expulsion from France under Henry VI. The French commanders went on steadily and skilfully, and beat us in detail. In this instance, we had not won the country by arms. Agincourt had no other effect than to open the road of retreat to Calais to Henry's army. His successes in France began at a considerably later date—were owing, at the first, to his understanding with the Duke of Burgundy (the infamous Jean Sans-Peur), and, in their extent, wholly to his alliance with the Duke's son, Philip, and with the Queen, Isabel of Bavaria. He had France given to him; he never won it. On the other hand, in the following reign, in despite of the excessive embarrassments of the government, and distresses of the country, the French at last made head against us, and, finally, fairly beat us out.

It was, probably, the extreme duration, as well as the *pro-focis* character of this contest, which engendered a feeling so much more than ordinarily bitter. The constant contention for upwards of an hundred years—the deep injuries inflicted—the deep injuries suffered—no doubt originally caused a hatred, the subsequent permanency of which has been equally surprising, melancholy, and certain. I say it is surprising, on account of the long peace (speaking in general terms) which subsequently existed between

the two nations. It is a fact but little attended to, that, with the exception of occasional descents on their coasts from time to time, there were no wars between France and England, from the cessation of hostilities in the reign of Henry VI., till after the Revolution: no wars, that is, of any considerable duration, and in no degree of the character of those which took place both before and since. But the deep feeling of national animosity was still cherished in the hearts of both nations. Peace for a succession of ages was not sufficient to wash out the rancour which had been generated by the crimes and miseries of *one*. This, in itself, sufficiently proves their intensity and extent.

This feeling by no means strongly existed before these wars. The English aristocracy were of French origin, and held themselves scrupulously aloof from those of Saxon descent. They spoke the French language; which was also used in all our public acts. This very point of language, indeed, is an index to the date at which the complete disunion I am speaking of supervened. Under Edward III., French was first discontinued in most public matters; and Henry V., upon his setting out on his expedition to France, ordered the Historiographer of the Order of the Garter to record the deeds of the Knights, in English, instead of in French, which had hitherto been the custom.

The general intercourse of the two nations, also, had, before these times, by no means been marked

by that individual ill-will, which afterwards attained such a height. They were continually drawn together for purposes of trade, and no extraneous causes of animosity had arisen. The wars between the countries were not of long duration, and left no venom behind them. How different from those of which Froissart is the historian! Their poisonous influence has scarcely yet worn itself out. But we are now,—and we should rejoice at it,—arrived at an age of the world, when it is no longer considered a mark of being good citizens of one state, to be eminent in hatred for those of another. In conformity with the spirit of *our* Times, our contests now are only of rapidity in the advancement of science, of letters, of the arts, of manufactures and commerce—in a word, of CIVILIZATION. Mutual victories in this field will confer mutual benefits, will generate mutual good-will,—instead of spreading desolation where there was plenty, and planting hatred and rancour in the room of fellowship and peace. To these issues has the advance of knowledge tended. It has put an end to old animosities, and is fast drawing a veil over their former existence. Such are its true tendencies; it proves the folly, as well as the guilt, of the feelings of Enmity, and the wisdom as well as the virtue of Good-Will.

My readers have now before them a picture of the most flourishing age of Chivalry. It is ill-favoured; but it is true. Its deformity arises from the features of the original, not from the unfaithfulness of the

painter. I have expressed myself strongly on the subject, both from a regard to truth generally, and from a firm and conscientious belief that the errors which are common upon these points, possess, even in the present day, a lingering evil influence on the notions with regard to civil polity of, I fear, not a few of those upon whom it is most hurtful that it should act. Assuredly, it never can tend to good, to colour and flatter a system which leads to results such as I have pointed out—to make bloodshed and ravage appear amiable; to hold up cut-throats and plunderers as the objects of our esteem and imitation. I may be accused of prejudice against Chivalry; but I cannot admit that to be a prejudice which is in fact an opinion that has sprung wholly from a knowledge of its effects as a system, and has grown exactly in proportion as that knowledge has encreased. Even in the researches necessary to this work, my dislike to the "Spirit of" these "Times" has risen into hatred, and that again into abhorrence. And I am convinced that if any of my readers should be induced, by the samples which I have here culled from our old historians, to turn to the original volumes,—the same causes will operate upon them the same effects which they have had upon me.

The

Court of Gaston de Foix.

THE

COURT OF GASTON DE FOIX.

CAP. I.

OF THE PROGRESS OF SIR JOHN FROISSART TO THE COURT OF THE COUNT OF FOIX; AND THE COMPANY HE MET UPON HIS JOURNEY.

A.D. 1388. IT is long now since I made any mention of the business of far countries; for the businesses near home have been so fresh, I left all other matters to write thereof. Howbeit, all this season, valiant men desiring to advance themselves in the realm of Castile and Portugal; in Gascony, in Quercy, in Limosin, and in Bigore; every day they imagined by what subtlety they could get one of another by deeds of arms, or by stealing of towns, castles, and fortresses. And therefore I, John Froissart, who have taken upon me to Chronicle this present History, at the request of the high-renowned prince Sir Guy of Chatillon, Count of Blois, Lord of Davenes, Beauvais, Destonhone, and of La Geude, my sovereign master and good lord; considering in myself how there was no great deeds of arms likely toward in the parts of Picardy or Flanders, it greatly

annoyed me to be idle; for I well knew that after my death this noble and high History should have its course, wherein divers noble men should have great pleasure and delight. And as yet, I thank God, I have understanding and remembrance of all things past, and my wit is quick and sharp enough to conceive all things shewed unto me, touching my principal matter; and my body is as yet able to endure and suffer pain. [1] All things considered, I thought I would not cease to pursue my first purpose, and to the intent to know the truth of deeds done in far countries, I found occasion to go to the high and mighty prince, Gaston, Count of Foix and of Bierne. [2] For I knew well that if I might have that grace to come into his house and to remain there at my leisure, I could not be so well informed for my purpose in none other place in the world. For thither resorted all manner of knights and strange squires, for the great nobleness of the said count. And, as I imagined, so I did, and shewed to my redoubted lord, the Count of Blois, my intent, and he gave me letters of recommendation to the Count of Foix.

And so I rode without peril or damage 'till I came to his house called Orthes, in the country of Bierne, on St. Catherine's day, in the year of grace one thousand three hundred fourscore and eight. And the said count, as soon as he saw me, bade me good cheer; and smiling said, how he knew me, and yet he never saw me before, but had often heard speak of me. And so he retained me in his house* to my great ease; and by the help of the

Nov. 25. A.D. 1388.

* "House" here signifies "Court," in its wide acceptation; it is so used repeatedly by Froissart, and must be so understood

letters of credence that I brought unto him, so that I might remain there at my pleasure. And there I was informed of the business of the realms of Castile, Portugal, Navarre, and Arragon; yea, and of the realm of England, and the countries of Bourbonois and Gascony. And the count himself, if I did demand any thing of him, did shew me all he knew; saying to me how the history that I had begun should hereafter be more praised than any other, and the reason why, he said, was this, "How that for fifty years past there had been done more marvellous deeds of arms in the world than in three hundred years before that." Thus was I in the court of the Count of Foix, well cherished and with pleasure. It was the thing that I most desired to know, news as touching my matter; and I had at my will lords, and knights, and squires, ever to inform me, and also the gentle count himself. I shall now declare, in fair language, all that I was informed of to increase my matter, and to give example to them that list to advance themselves.

Now in the season that I enterprised to go to see the Count of Foix, and to see the diversities of the countries where, as yet, I had never been before; when I departed from Carcassone, I left the way to Thoulouse, and went by easy journeys to the castle of Saverdun, and so to the good city of Pamiers, which pertained to the Count of Foix*. And there I tarried,

throughout this narrative: "retained me in his house," means of his household; or, rather, that he was, as a visitor, to live at the expense of the court, though not under the roof of the palace: a custom by no means infrequent in those times.

* For the route and localities of this journey, see Map, as also Note [3.]

abiding for some company going into the country of Bierne, where the count then was. And when I had tarried there for the space of three days (in great pleasure, for the city was delectable, standing among the fair vines, and environed with a fair river, large and clear, called L'Arriège), on a day, it so fortuned, that thither came a knight of the Count of Foix, from Avignon-ward, called Sir Espaign de Lyon, a valiant and expert man of arms, about the age of fifty years; and so I gat me into his company; and he was greatly desirous to hear of the matters of France, and so we were six days in our journey ere we came to Orthes. [3]

And this knight, every day after he had said his prayers, most part all the day after, he took his pastime with me in demanding tidings. And also when I demanded any thing of him, he would answer me to my purpose. And when we departed from Pamiers, we passed by the mountain of Cesse, which was an evil passage; and so came to dinner to a castle of the Count of Foix, called Carlat, standing high on a mountain; and, after dinner, the knight said to me, "Sir, let us ride together fair and easily, we have but two leagues to ride to our lodging;" and so I was content to do.

And so we rode till we came to Montesquieu, a good town closed, pertaining to the Count of Foix. And in the morning we departed from Montesquieu, and came to the town of Palaminich, a good town closed, on the river of Garonne, pertaining to the Count of Foix. And when we were almost there, we thought to have passed the bridge of Garonne, to have entered into the town, but we could not, for the day before it had so sore rained from the moun-

tains of Catalonia and Arragon, that it raised up the river of Garonne, so that it broke one of the arches of the bridge, which was of timber; wherefore we returned again to Montesquieu, and tarried there all that day. And the next day the knight had counsel to pass the river by the boats of Casseres; so we rode thither, and did so much that we passed the river of Garonne with great pain and peril; for the boat that we were in was not very great. It could not take at one time but two horses and their keepers, and they that ruled the boat. And so we passed the river and rode along by the river of Garonne, till we entered into the land of the Count of Comminges and Armagnac; and on the other side of the river of Garonne into the lands of the Count of Foix. And as we rode along between these towns, and castles, and the river, in a fair meadow, this knight said to me:—

"Sir John, I have seen here many fair skirmishes and encounterings between the men of Foix and of Armagnac; for as yet there was no town or castle but was well furnished with men of war, so they warred upon each other. [4] Yonder is a castle against which the Armagnacs made a bastide, and did much hurt in the Count of Foix's land; but I shall show you how it fortuned. The Count of Foix on a night sent his brother, Peter de Bierne, with two hundred spears, and with them four hundred villeins of the country, charged with faggots, much wood, and bushes; and they brought it to the bastide, and then set fire thereon, and so burnt the bastide and all them that were therein, without mercy; and since, it was never made again."

So, in such devices, we rode all that day along the river Garonne, and what on the one side and the

other, we saw many fair castles and fortresses; all that were on our left-hand pertained to the Count of Foix, and on the other side pertained to the Count of Armagnac.

And as we rode, I said, "Sir, I pray you show me where the river Garonne is become? for I can see it no more."

"You say truth," quoth the knight, "it departeth here at the entering of these mountains, and it groweth and cometh out of a fountain three leagues hence, the way to Catalonia, by a castle called St. Béart, the frontier of the realm of France towards Arragon. And there is now a Squire called Ernalton, otherwise called Bourge du Spain, he is lord thereof, and chatelain of all the country. If we see him I will show you to him; he is a goodly person, and a good man at arms. In all Gascony there is none like him for strength of body; therefore the Count of Foix loveth him right well, and hath him ever in his company; and I think at this feast of Christmas you shall see him at the Count of Foix's house. And speaking of Christmas, I will show you a great deed he did in sport not a three years past.

"So it was, on a Christmas day, the Count of Foix held a great feast, and a plentiful of knights and squires as is his usage; and it was a cold day, and the count dined in the hall, and with him a great company of knights and lords; and after dinner he departed out of the hall and went up into a gallery of twenty-four stairs in height, in which gallery there was a great chimney wherein they made fire when the count was there, and at that time there was a small fire, for the count loved no great fire; howbeit, he had wood enough thereabout, and in Bierne there is

wood enough. The same day it was a great frost and very cold, and when the count was in the gallery, and saw the fire so little, he said to the knights and squires about him, 'Sirs, this is but a small fire, and the day so cold.' Then Ernalton of Spain went down the stairs, and beneath, in the court, he saw a great many of asses laden with wood to serve the house. Then he went and took one of the greatest asses with the wood, and laid him on his back, and went up all the stairs into the gallery, and did cast down the ass with all the wood into the chimney, and the ass's feet upwards, whereof the Count of Foix had great joy, and so had all they that were there, and did marvel at his strength, and how he alone came up all the stairs with the ass and the wood on his back."

I took great pleasure in this tale, and in other that this knight Sir Espagne de Leon shewed me, whereby I thought my journey much the shorter; and in shewing of these matters, we rode near to the castle of Barbazon, which is strong and fair, and within a league of Tarbe, and a fair way coasting the river of Lysse, which we saw before us. Then we rode fair and easily at our leisure to refresh our horses, and there he showed me the river, the castle, and the town of Montegalliard, and the way that lay to Lourde.

CAP. II.

OF THE PITEOUS END OF SIR PETER ERNAUT, CHATELAIN OF LOURDE.

A.D. 1388.

AND thus, as we rode, we discoursed of the deeds and exploits of the Count of Foix; for Sir Espagne de Leon had dwelled long in his court, and fought often under his banner; and I strove to inform me as much as I could of the deeds and gestes of the said Count Gaston, as well for the increasing of my matter and history in general, as because I was going to tarry at his court for a season.

Among other things, which not long theretofore had chanced, the knight discoursed of the piteous end of Sir Peter Ernaut, of Bierne, who was a good knight and a valiant and a true. Now thus it chanced, as this knight, Sir Espagne de Leon, made narration to me as we went along together on our way.

The Prince of Wales and of Acquitaine*, while he was at Tarbe, had great will to go to see the castle of Lourde, which was a three leagues off, near to the mountains; and when he was there, and had well advised the town, the castle, and the country, he praised it greatly, as well for the strength of the castle, as because it stood on the frontiers of divers countries: for the garrison there might run well into

* Vide Story, entitled, *The Black Prince in Spain*: vol. I.

the realm of Arragon, into Catalonia, and to Barcelona. Then the prince called to him a knight of his household, in whom he had great trust, and loved him entirely, and he had served him truly, and was called Sir Peter Ernaut, of the country of Bierne; an expert man of arms, and cousin of the Count of Foix. Then the prince said to him, "Sir Ernaut, I institute and make you chatelain and captain of Lourde, and governor of the country of Bigore; look that you keep this castle so well that you make a good account thereof to the king, my father, and to me." "Sir," quoth the knight, "I thank you, and I shall observe your commandment." Then did he homage to the prince, and the prince put him in possession.

A.D. 1368–70. Now, it is known that when the war begun to renew between England and France, the Count Guy of St. Poule, and Sir Hugh of Chatillon, master of the Cross-bows in France, at that time besieged the town of Abbeville, and won it, with all the country of Poitou. The same time, two knights of Bigore turned French, and took the town, city, and castle of Tarbe, which was but easily kept for the king of England; but still the castle of Lourde was in the hands of Sir Peter Ernaut, of Bierne, who would in nowise yield up the castle, but made ever great war against the realm of France, and sent for great company of adventurers into Bierne and Gascony, to help and to aid him to make war; so that he had together many good men of arms, and he had with him six captains, and every man fifty spears under him.

A.D. 1373–75. Now, at the same season, [5] the Duke of Anjou took the castle of Malvoison from the

English, and departing from thence with all his host, came and laid siege to Lourdè, which, as you have heard, Sir Peter Ernaut held for the king of England; and after fifteen days, and many feats of arms done, the duke ordained many instruments of war for the assault, so that finally the town was won; but they lost neither man, woman, nor good, for they were all withdrawn into the castle; for they knew well at length the town would not hold, for it was closed but with dikes and pales.

When the town of Lourde was won, the Frenchmen had great joy, and so lodged in the town round about the castle; which was not pregnable, without it were with long siege. There the duke tarried more than six weeks, and lost more than he won; for the castle standeth on a round rock, made in such a manner that no man could approach it by scaling or otherwise, but by one entry. And there were many skirmishes and many feats of arms done, and divers knights and squires of France were hurt, such as would press too near.

Now, when the duke saw how he could not have his intent to get the castle of Lourde, then he fell in treaty with the captain therein, and offered him much money to give up the garrison. The knight, who was of great valiantness, excused himself, and said, how the garrison was not his, but it pertained to the heritage of the king of England. He could not sell it, nor give it, nor put it away, without he should be a traitor, which in nowise he would be; but true to his natural lord during his life. And moreover he said, that when the castle was delivered to him, it was on a condition, which he swore solemnly by his faith, in the Prince of Wales's hand to observe, that he should keep the

castle of Lourde against all men during his life, except it were against the king of England. The duke could never have any other answer of him for any gift nor promise that he could make. And when the Duke of Anjou and his council saw they could have nothing else, and that they lost their pain, they dislodged; and at their departing clean burnt the town.

Now the Duke of Anjou, though he did no hurt to the Count of Foix, and had no will to make him war, yet he was displeased that the knights and squires of Bierne held Lourde against him. And while he lodged between Mount Marsen and the Bocca d'Albret, he sent to the count to Orthes, Sir Peter of Beule, whom the earl received honourably, and made him as good cheer as he could, and gave him mulettes and coursers, and to his men great gifts. And he sent by him to the Duke of Anjou four coursers and two allans, of Spain*, fair and good. And there were secret treaties between the count and this Sir Peter Beule; of which treaties no man knew the intent for a good space thereafter. But after, by such evident tokens as appeared, we supposed somewhat, and the matter I shall shew you, and by that time we shall come to Tarbe.

Anon, after that the Duke of Anjou had made his voyage, and that he was at Thoulouse, the Count of Foix sent by his letters certain messengers to Lourde, to his cousin Sir Peter Ernaut of Bierne, desiring him to come and speak with him at Orthes. And when the knight had read the count's letters, and saw his notable message, he had divers imaginations, and wist not whether he might go or abide. All things

* A species of dog; the breed of which comes from Albania.—See Note [6.]

considered, he said he would go; because in nowise he would displease the count. And when he departed from Lourde, he said to John of Bierne, his brother, in the presence of all the companions of the garrison:—

"Brother John, the Count of Foix has sent for me. I cannot tell you why; but since it is his pleasure to speak with me I will go to him. I fear me greatly that I shall be required to give up this fortress of Lourde, for the Duke of Anjou when he was in the country coasted Bierne, and entered not therein. And the Count of Foix hath long intended to have the castle of Malvoisin, to the intent to be lord of the land of Bourg, and of the frontiers of Cominge, and of Bigore. I know not what treaty there is made between him and the Duke of Anjou; but one thing I say plainly, that I shall never yield up the castle but to my own natural lord, the King of England. Wherefore, brother John, in case that I establish you in mine absence to be captain here, you shall swear to me by the faith of your gentleness, that you shall keep this castle in like manner and form as I do; and that for life or death you fail not." And John of Bierne swore to fulfil his desire. Then Sir Peter Ernaut went to Orthes, and alighted at the sign of the Moon; and, when he thought it was time, he went to the castle of Orthes to the count, who, with great joy, received him, and made him sit at his board, and shewed him as great semblance of love as he could.

And after dinner he said, "Cousin Peter, I have to speak with you of divers things; wherefore I will that you depart not without my leave." The knight answered and said; "Sir, I shall not depart until it be your pleasure."

Then, the third day after, the Count of Foix said unto him in the presence of the Viscount of Gousserant, his brother, and before the Lord D'Anchin of Bigore, and divers other knights and squires—the count spoke aloud that every man might hear him, "Cousin Peter, I sent for you, and you be come; I will ye know the Duke of Anjou would me much evil because of the garrison of Lourde, which you keep; for the which cause my land was near hand over run if it had not been for good friends. And it is his opinion, and divers others of his council, that he hateth me because, he says, I maintain and sustain you, because you be of Bierne. And it is not meet for me to have the evil will of so great a prince as the Duke of Anjou is. Wherefore I command you, as you would eschew my displeasure, and by the faith and lineage which you owe to me, that you yield up the garrison of Lourde into my hands." When the knight heard these words he was sore abashed; and studied a little, remembering what answer he might make; for he saw well the count spake in good faith. "Howbeit, all things considered," he said—"Sir, true it is I owe to you faith and homage; for I am a poor knight of your blood and your country. But, as for the castle of Lourde, I will not deliver it ye. You have sent for me to do with me as you list—I hold it of the King of England—he sent me there; and to none other living will I deliver it." When the Count of Foix heard that answer, his blood chafed for ire; and he said, drawing out his dagger, "Traitor! sayest thou nay? By my head, thou hast not said that for nought;" and so therewith he struck the knight, that he wounded him in five places; and there was no knight or baron that durst step between

them. Then the knight said, "Ah, Sir! you do me no gentleness to send for me to slay me!" And yet, for all the strokes that he had with the dagger, the count commanded him to be cast into prison, down into a deep dyke. And so he was; and there he died, for his wounds were but evil looked unto. "Ah, St. Mary!" quoth I to the knight, "was not this a great cruelty?" "Whatever it was," quoth the knight, "thus it was. [7] Let one advise him well ere he displease him, for when he be angry there is no pardon. He held once his cousin-germain, the Viscount Chataubon, who is his heritor, in prison in the tower of Orthes, and after ransomed him for forty thousand francs."

"Why, Sir," quoth I, "has the Count of Foix no children?" "No, truly, Sir," quoth he, "not by any wife, but he hath two young knights that be his bastards; whom ye shall see, and he loveth them as well as himself, and they be called Sir John and Sir Gracian."

Then I demanded if ever he were married.

"Yea, truly!" quoth he, "and is yet, but his wife is not with him—she is in Navarre, for the king there is her cousin; she was daughter to King Louis of Navarre." Yet then I demanded if ever the count had any children? "Yes, Sir," quoth he, "he had a fair son who had his father's heart, and all the country loved him; for by him all the country of Bierne had rest and peace, whereas it hath been since in debate and strife, for he had married the sister of the Count of Armagnac."

"Sir," quoth I, "what became of that son, an it may be known?" "Sir," answered he, "I shall shew you; but not as now, for the matter is over long,

and we are near the town as you see." Therewith I left the knight in peace, and we came to Tarbe, and took our lodging at the Star; and there we tarried all that day, for it was a town of good entertainment for man and horse, with good hay and oats, and a fair river.

The next day, after mass, we mounted on horseback, and came to a town called Jorre, which valiantly always held against them of Lourde, and so we passed by the town without, and then entered upon the country of Bierne. Then the knight stood still, and said, "Sir, behold here is Bierne;" and we stood in a crossway. The knight advised him which way to take either to Morlens, or to Pau; and we took the way to Morlens, riding over the lands of Bierne, which were right plain. Then I demanded of him if the town of Pau was near us, and he said "Yes," and so he shewed me the steeple; howbeit, the distance was further off than it seemed, for it was an evil way to ride because of the mires, to them that knew not the country. And not far thence was the castle of Lourde, and I demanded who was as then captain there? he said, "That as then the Seneschal of Bigore was captain there, admitted by the King of England, brother to Sir Peter Ernaut, as you have heard before." "That is true, Sir," quoth I; "but, did he never after go to see the Count of Foix?" He answered and said, "Since the death of his brother he never came there, but other of his company have been often with the count, as Peter d'Anchin, Ernaut of Restue, Ernaut of St. Column, and other."

"Sir," said I, "hath the Count of Foix made any amends for the death of that knight, and was he sorry for his death?"

"Yes, truly, Sir," quoth he, "he was truly sorry; but as for amends I know of none, unless it be by secret penance, masses, or prayers. He hath with him the same knight's son, who is called John of Bierne, a gracious squire; and the count loveth him right well."

"Ah, Sir," quoth I, "the Duke of Anjou, who would so fain have the castle of Lourde, ought to be well content with the Count of Foix, when he slew such a knight, his own cousin, for to accomplish his desire."

"By my faith, Sir, so he was; for anon after that, the duke came to the French king; the king sent into this country Roger of Spain, and a President of the Parliament Chamber of Paris, with letters sealed, making mention how the king did give to the Count of Foix the county of Bigore during his life, to hold the same of the crown of France. The count then thanked the king for the great love he shewed him, and for that great gift without any request making; but for all the said Sir Roger of Spain could say, shew, or do, the count would in no wise take the gift; but he took the castle of Malvoisin, for that was a free land; for that castle and appurtenances he holdeth of no man but of God, and it also anciently pertaineth to his inheritance. The French king, by the means of the Duke of Anjou, did give it him; and the count sware and promised to take it on a condition that he should never set any man there that should do any evil to the realm of France. And so he did; for such as were there feared as much the Englishmen as any other French garrison in Gascony; for the Biernois durst not run into the county of Foix."

All these matters that Sir Espagne de Lyon shewed

me right well contented me. And every night as soon as we were at our lodgings I always wrote all that I had heard in the day, the better thereby to have them in remembrance; for writing is the best remembrance that may be. And so we rode the same morning to Morlens; but ere we came there, I said; "Sir, your words be to me right agreeable, for it hath done me great pleasure all that ye have ever shewed me; which shall not be lost, for it shall be put in remembrance and chronicled, if God will give me grace to return to the town of Valenciennes, where I was born. But, Sir, I am sore displeased at one thing, which is, that so high and valiant a prince as the Count of Foix should be without lawful issue." "Sir," quoth the knight, "if he had one, as once he had, he would be the most joyous prince in all the world, and so would be all the country."

"Why, Sir, is his land then without an heir?"

"Nay, Sir," quoth he, "the Viscount of Castlebon, his cousin-germain, is his heir."

"Is he a valiant man in arms?" quoth I.

"Nay, by my faith, Sir, and therefore the count loveth him not, and thinketh to make his two bastard sons, who be right valiant, his heirs, and thinketh to marry them in a high lineage: for he hath gold and silver enough, whereby he thinketh to get them wives such as shall aid and comfort them." "Sir," quoth I, "it may well be, howbeit it is not reasonable that bastards should be made heritors of land." "Wherefore not, Sir," quoth he, "if there lack good heirs? See ye not how the Spaniards have crowned Henry, a bastard, to be king, and also they of Portugal have crowned a bastard to be their king? Was not William, the Conqueror of England,

bastard son to a Duke of Normandy, and was king there; so that all the kings since have descended from him?" "Sir," quoth I, "all this may well be; there is nothing there but may fall. And, by my faith, Sir, ye have well declared the matter; I shall put it in perpetual memory, if God give me grace, to return into my own country. But, Sir, if I durst, I fain would question of you one thing—by what incident the Count of Foix's son died?" Then the knight studied a little, and said, "Sir, the manner of his death is right piteous, I will not speak thereof. When you come to Orthes you shall find them that will shew you, if you demand it." And then I held my peace, and we rode till we came to Morlens.

CAP. III.

OF THE GREAT VERTUOUSNESSE AND LARGESSE THAT WAS IN THE COUNT OF FOIX, AND THE MANNER OF THE PITEOUS DEATH OF GASTON, THE COUNT'S SON.

A.D. 1388. THE next day we departed and rode to dinner to Mountgarbell, and so to Ercye, and there we drank; and by sun-setting, we came to Orthes. The knight alighted at his own lodging, and I alighted at the moon, where dwelt a squire of the Count Ernalton de Pyne, who well received me, because I was of France. Sir Espagne de Lyon went to the castle to the count, and found him in his gallery, for he had but dined a little before; for the count's usage was always that it was high noon ere he arose out of his bed, and supped ever at midnight. The knight shewed him how I was come thither, and incontinent I was sent for to my lodging, for he was the lord, of all the world, that most desired to speak with strangers, to hear tydinges.

When the count saw me, he made me good cheer, and retained me as of his house, where I was more than twelve weeks, and my horse well entreated*. The acquaintance of him and of me, was because I had brought with me a book, which I made at the contemplation of Winceslaus of Bohemia, Duke of Luxem-

* See Note page 4.

bourg and of Brabant, which book was called the Meliador, containing all the songs, ballads, rondeaux, and virelays, which the gentle duke had made in his time; which, by imagination, I had gathered together. This book the Count of Foix was glad to see, and every night after supper I read therein to him; and while I read there was none durst speak any word, because he would I should be well understood, wherein he took great solace. And when it came to any matter of question, then he would speak to me, not in Gascoigne, but in good and fair French. And of his estate and house I shall somewhat record, for I tarried there so long, that I might well perceive and know much.

This Count Gaston of Foix with whom I was, at that time was of a fifty years of age and nine; and I say I have in my time seen many knights, kings, princes, and others, but I never saw none like him of personage, nor of so fair form, nor so well made: his visage fair, sanguine, and smiling; his eyne gray and amorous, where he list to set his regard. In every thing he was so perfect, that he cannot be praised too much; he loved that which ought to be loved, and hated that that ought to be hated. He was a wise knight, of high enterprise, and of good counsel; he never had miscreant with him: he said many orisons every day, a noctum of the Psalter, matins of our Lady, of the Holy Ghost, and of the Cross, and dirge every day. He gave five florins in small money at his gate to poor folks for the love of God. He was large and courteous in gifts. He could right well take where it pertained to him, and deliver again wherever he ought. He loved hounds, of all beasts, winter and summer. He loved hunting. He never

loved folly, outrage, nor foolish largess; every month he would know what he spended. He took in his country, to receive his revenues, and to serve him, notable persons; that is to say, twelve receivers, and ever, from two months to two months, two of them should serve for this receipt: For at the two months end, he would change and put other two into that office, and one that he trusted best should be his comptroller, and to him all other should account, and the comptroller should account to him by rolls and books written, and the accounts to remain still with the count. He had certain coffers in his chamber, out of the which oft times he would take money to give to lords, knights, and squires, such as came to him; for none should depart from him without some gift: and yet daily multiplied his treasure, to resist the adventures and fortunes that he doubted. He was of good and easy acquaintance with every man, and courteously would speak to them. He was short in counsel and answers. He had four secretaries, and at his rising they must ever be ready at his hand without any calling, and when any letter were delivered him, and that he had read it, then he would call them to write again, or else for some other thing. In this estate the Count of Foix lived; and at midnight, when he came out of his chamber into the hall to supper, he had ever before him twelve torches burning, borne by twelve varlets, standing before his table all supper. They gave a great light, and the hall was ever full of knights and squires, and many other tables were dressed to sup who would. There was none should speak to him at his table but if he were called. His meat was lightly, wild fowl, the legs and wings only, and in the day he did eat and drink but little.

He had great pleasure in harmony of instruments; he could do it right well himself: he would have songs sung before him. He would gladly see conceits and fantasies at his table, and when he had seen it, then he would send it to the other tables bravely; all this I considered and advised. And ere I came to his court I had been in many courts of kings, dukes, princes, counts, and great ladies; but I was never in none that so well liked me. Nor there was none more rejoiced in deeds of arms than the count did; there was seen in his hall, chamber, and court, knights and squires of honour going up and down, and talking of arms and of amours: All honour there was found, all manner of tidings of every realm and country there might be heard, for out of every country there was resort, for the valiantness of this count. [8]

There I was informed of the most part of the deeds of arms that were done in Spain, in Portugal, in Arragon, in Navarre, in England, and in Scotland, and in the frontiers and limitations of Languedoc; for I saw come thither to the count while I was there, knights and squires of all nations, and so I was informed by them, and by the count himself, of all things that I demanded. There I enquired how Gaston, the count's son, died, for Sir Espaigne of Leon would not shew me any thing thereof; and so much I enquired, that an ancient squire, and a notable man, shewed the matter to me, and began thus:—

"True it is," quoth he, "that the Count of Foix and my Lady of Foix, his wife, agreeth not well together, nor have not done of a long season, and the discord between them was first moved by the King of Navarre, who was brother to the lady: for the King

of Navarre pledged himself for the Lord Dalbret, whom the Count of Foix had in prison, for the sum of fifty thousand francs; and the Count of Foix, who knew that the King of Navarre was crafty and malicious, in the beginning would not trust him, wherewith the Countess of Foix had great displeasure and indignation against the count her husband, and said to him—

"Sir, ye repute but small honour in the King of Navarre, my brother, when ye will not trust him for fifty thousand francs: though ye have no more of the Armagnacs, nor of the house of Dalbret, than ye have, it ought to suffice. And also, Sir, ye know well ye should assign out my dower, which amounteth to fifty thousand francs, which ye should put into the hands of my brother, the King of Navarre; wherefore, Sir, ye cannot be evil paid."

"Dame," quoth he, "ye say truth; but if I thought that the King of Navarre would stop the payment for that cause, the Lord Dalbret should never have gone out of Orthes, and so I should have been paid to the last penny; and since ye desire it, I will do it; not for the love of you, but for the love of my son."

So by these words, and by the King of Navarre's obligation, who became debtor to the Count of Foix, the Lord Dalbret was delivered quit, and became French, and was married in France to the sister of the Duke of Bourbon, and paid at his ease to the King of Navarre the sum of fifty thousand francs for his ransom, for the which sum the king was bound to the Count of Foix; but he would not send it to the count.

Then the Count of Foix said to his wife—"Dame,

ye must go into Navarre to the king your brother, and shew him how I am not well content with him, that he will not send me that he hath received of mine."

The lady answered, how that she was ready to go at his commandment. And so she departed, and rode to Pampeluna to the king her brother, who received her with much joy. The lady did her message from point to point.

Then the king answered—"Fair sister, the sum of money is yours. The count should give it for your dower; it shall never go out of the realm of Navarre since I have it in possession."

"Ah, Sir," quoth the lady, "by this ye shall set great hate between the count, my husband, and you; and if ye hold your purpose, I dare not return again into the county of Foix, for my husband will slay me. He will say I have deceived him."

"I cannot tell," quoth the king, "what ye will do; either tarry or depart; but as for the money I will not depart from it; it pertaineth to me to keep it for you, but it shall never go out of Navarre."

The countess could have none other answer of the king her brother, and so she tarried still in Navarre, and durst not return again. The Count of Foix, when he saw the dealing of the King of Navarre, he began to hate his wife, and was evil content with her; howbeit she was in no fault, but that she had not returned again when she had done her message. But she durst not, for she knew well the count, her husband, was cruel where he took displeasure. Thus the matter standeth.

The count's son, called Gaston, grew and waxed goodly, and was married to the daughter of the Count

of Armagnac, a fair lady, sister to the count that now is, the Lord Bertrand of Armagnac, and, by the conjunction of that marriage, there should have been peace between Foix and Armagnac*. The childe was a fifteen or sixteen years of age, and resembled right well to his father. On a time he desired to go into Navarre to see his mother, and his uncle the king of Navarre; which was in an evil hour for him and for all this country. When he was come into Navarre, he had there good cheer, and tarried with his mother a certain space, and then took his leave; but for all that he could do, he could not get his mother out of Navarre, to have gone with him into Foix. For she demanded if the count had commanded him so to do, or no; and he answered, that when he departed the count spake nothing thereof. Therefore the lady durst not go thither, but so tarried still.

Then the childe went to Pampeluna to take his leave of the king his uncle. The king made him great cheer, and tarried him there a ten days, and gave to him great gifts, and to his men. Also the last gift that the king gave him was his death. I shall shew you how.

When this gentleman should depart, the king drew him apart into his chamber and gave him a little purse full of powder, which powder was such, that if any creature living did eat thereof, he should incontinent die without remedy. Then the king said, "Gaston, fair nephew, ye shall do as I shall shew to you. Ye see how the Count of Foix, your father, wrongfully hath your mother, my sister, in great hate, whereof I am sore displeased, and so ought ye to be; howbeit,

* See Note [4.]

to perform all the matter, and that your father should love again your mother, to that intent ye shall take a little of this powder, and put it on some meat that your father may eat it; but beware that no man see you. And as soon as he hath eaten it, he shall intend to nothing but to have again his wife, and so to love her ever after, which ye ought greatly to desire; and of this that I shew you let no man know, but keep it secret, or else ye lose all the deed." The childe, who thought all that the king said to him had been true, said, "Sir, it shall be done as ye have devised;" and so he departed from Pampeluna, and returned to Orthes. The count, his father, made him good cheer, and demanded tidings of the king of Navarre, and what gifts he had given him; and the childe shewed him how he had given him divers, and shewed him all except the purse with the powder.

Oft times this young Gaston, and Juan, his bastard brother, lay together, for they loved each other like brethren, and were like arrayed and apparelled, for they were near of a greatness and of one age; and it happened on a time, as their clothes lay together on their bed, Juan saw a purse at Gaston's coat, and said, "What thing is this that ye bear ever about you?" Whereof Gaston had no joy, and said, "Juan, give me my coat, ye have nothing to do therewith;" and all that day after Gaston was pensive.

And it fortuned a three days after, as God would that the count should be saved, Gaston and his brother Juan fell out together, playing at tennis, and Gaston gave him a blow, and the child went into his father's chamber and wept. And the count as then had heard mass, and when the count saw him weep, he said, "Son Juan, what ailest thou?" "Sir,"

quoth he, "Gaston hath beaten me, but he were more worthy to be beaten than me." "Why so?" quoth the count, and incontinent suspected something. "By my faith, Sir," said he, "since he returned out of Navarre, he beareth privily at his breast a purse full of powder; I wot not what it is, nor what he will do therewith, but he hath said to me once or twice, that my lady, his mother, should shortly be again in your grace, and better beloved than ever she was." "Peace!" quoth the count, "and speak no more; and shew this to no man living." "Sir," said he, "no more I shall." Then the count entered into imagination, and so came to the hour of his dinner; and he washed, and sat down at his table in the hall. Gaston, his son, was used to set down all his service, and to make the essayes*. And when he had set down the first course, the count cast his eyes on him, and saw the strings of the purse hanging at his bosom. Then his blood changed, and he said, "Gaston, come hither, I would speak with thee, in thine ear." And the childe came to him, and the count took him by the bosom, and found out the purse, and with his knife cut it from his bosom. The childe was abashed, and stood still, and spake no word, and looked as pale as ashes for fear, and began to tremble. The Count of Foix opened the purse, and took of the powder, and laid it on a trencher of bread, and called to him a dog, and gave it him to eat; and as soon as the dog had eaten the first morsel, he turned his eyes in his head, and died incontinent.

* In the original French, "Faisait essay de toutes ses viandes;" *i. e.* was taster.

And when the count saw that, he was sore displeased, and also he had good cause, and so rose from the table, and took his knife, and would have stricken his son. Then the knights and squires ran between them, and said, "Sir, for God's sake have mercy, and be not so hasty; be well informed first of the matter, ere ye do any evil to your child." And the first word that the count said, was, "Ah! Gaston! traitor! for to increase thine heritage that should come to thee, I have had war and hatred of the French king,—of the king of England,—of the king of Spain,—of the king of Navarre, and of the king of Arragon, and as yet I have borne all their malice, and now thou wouldst murder me; it moveth of an evil nature, but first thou shalt die with this stroke." And so he stepped forth with his knife, and would have slain him; but then all the knights and squires kneeled down before him weeping, and said, "Ah, Sir, have mercy for God's sake—slay not Gaston, your son. Remember ye have no more children; Sir, cause him to be kept, and take good information of the matter; peradventure he knew not what he bare, and peradventure is nothing guilty of the deed." "Well," quoth the count, "incontinent put him in prison, and let him be so kept that I may have a reckoning of him." Then the childe was put into the tower.

And the count took a great many of them that served his son, and some of them departed; and as yet the Bishop of Lescar is out of the country, for he was had in suspect, and so were divers others. The count caused to be put to death a fifteen right horribly; and the cause that the count laid to them was, he said, it could be none otherwise but that

they knew of the childe's secrets, wherefore the yought to have shewed it to him, and to have said, "Sir, Gaston, your son, beareth a purse at his bosom." Because they did not thus, they dyed horribly; whereof it was great pity, for some of them were as fresh and jolly squires as were any in all the country. For ever the count was served with good men.

This thing touched the count near to the heart, and that he well shewed: for, on a day, he assembled at Orthes all the nobles and prelates of Foix and of Bierne, and all the notable persons of his country; and when they were all assembled, he shewed them wherefore he sent for them, as how he had found his son in this default, for the which he said his intent was to put him to death, as he had well deserved. Then all the people answered to that case with one voice, and said, "Sir, saving your grace, we will not that Gaston should die; he is your heir, and ye have no more." And when the count heard the people how they desired for his son, he somewhat refrained his ire. Then he thought to chastise him in prison a month or two, and then to send him on some voyage for two or three year, till he might somewhat forget his evil will, and that the childe might be of greater age and of more knowledge.

Then he gave leave to all the people to depart; but they of Foix would not depart from Orthes till the count should assure them that Gaston should not die; they loved the childe so well. Then the count promised them, but he said he would keep him in prison a certain time to chastise him; and so upon this promise every man departed, and Gaston abode still in prison.

These tidings spread abroad into divers places, and at that time Pope Gregory the Eleventh was at Avignon. Then he sent the Cardinal of Amiens in legation into Bierne, to have come to the Count of Foix for that business. And by that time he came to Beziers, he heard such tidings that he needed not to go any further for that matter; for there he heard how Gaston, son to the Count of Foix was dead. Since I have shewed you so much, now I shall shew you how he dyed.

The Count of Foix caused his son to be kept in dark chamber, in the town of Orthes, a ten days; little did he eat or drink, yet he had enough brought him every day, but when he saw it he would go therefrom, and set little thereby. And some said that all the meat that had been brought him stood whole and entire the day of his death, wherefore it was great marvel that he lived so long, for divers reasons. The count caused him to be kept in the chamber alone, without any company, either to counsel or comfort him; and all that season the child lay in his clothes as he came in, and he argued in himself, and was full of melancholy, and cursed the time that ever he was born and engendered, to come to such an end.

The same day that he died, they that served him of meat and drink, when they came to him, they said, "Gaston, here is meat for you;" he made no care thereof, and said "Set it down there." He that served him regarded and saw in the prison all the meat stand whole as it had been brought him before, and so departed and closed the chamber-door, and went to the count and said, "Sir, for God's sake have mercy on your son, Gaston, for he is near

famished in prison; there he lieth. I think he never did eat any thing since he came into prison, for I have seen there this day all that ever I brought him before, lying together in a corner." Of those words the count was sore displeased; and without any word speaking, went out of his chamber, and came to the prison where his son was, and in an evil hour. He had the same time a little knife in his hand to pare withal his nails. He opened the prison door, and came to his son, and had the little knife in his hand, not an inch out of his hand, and in great displeasure he thrust his hand to his son's throat, and the point of the knife a little entered into his throat, into a certain vein, and said, "Ah, traitor! why dost not thou eat thy meat?" And therewith the earl departed without any more doing or saying, and went into his own chamber. The childe was abashed, and afraid of the coming of his father, and also was feeble of fasting, and the point of the knife a little entered into a vein of his throat, and so he fell down suddenly and died. The count was scarcely in his chamber, but the keeper of the childe came to him, and said, "Sir, Gaston, your son, is dead!" "Dead?" quoth the count, "Yea, truly, Sir," answered he. The count would not believe it, but sent thither a squire that was by him, and he went, and came again, and said, "Sir, surely he is dead." Then the count was sore displeased, and made great complaint for his son, and said, "Ah, Gaston! what a poor adventure is this for thee, and for me!—In an evil hour thou wentest to Navarre to see thy mother; I shall never have the joy that I had before!" Then the count caused his barber to shave him, and clothed himself in black,

and all his house, and with much sore weeping the childe was borne to the Friars in Orthes, and there buried.

Thus, as I have shewed you, the Count of Foix slew Gaston, his son; but the king of Navarre gave the occasion of his death. [9]

CAP. IV.

HOW SIR PETER OF BIERNE HAD A STRANGE MALADY; AND OF THE COUNTESS OF BISCAY, HIS WIFE.

A.D. 1388. WHEN I had heard this tale of the death of Gaston, son to the Count de Foix, I had great pity thereof, for the love of the count, his father, whom I found a lord of high recommendation, noble, liberal, and courteous; and also for love of the country that should be in great strife for lack of an heir.

Then I thanked the squire, and so departed from him; but afterward I saw him divers times in the count's house, and talked oftentimes with him. And on a time, I demanded of him, of Sir Peter of Bierne, bastard brother to the Count of Foix, (because he seemed to me a knight of great valour,) "Whether he were rich, and married or no?" The squire answered, and said, "Truly he is married; but his wife and children be not in his company." "And why, Sir?" quoth I. "I shall shew you," quoth the squire.

"This Sir Peter of Bierne hath an usage, that in the night-time while he sleepeth, he will rise and arm himself, and draw his sword and fight all about the house, and cannot tell with whom, and then goeth to bed again. And when he is waking, his servants would shew him how he did; and he would say that he knew nothing thereof, and how they lyed. Sometimes

his servants would leave none armour nor swords in his chamber, and when he would thus rise and find none armour, he would make such a noise and rumour as though all the devils of hell had been in his chamber."

"Then I demanded if he had great lands by his wife?"

"Yes, truly, Sir," quoth he; "but the lady by whom cometh the land joyeth of the profit thereof; this Sir Peter of Bierne hath but the fourth part thereof. His wife is in Castile, with the king, her cousin. Her father was Count of Biscay, and was cousin-germain to king Don Pedro, who slew him, and also he would have had the lady to have put her in prison; and he took possession of all the land, and as long as he lived the lady had nothing there. And it was said to this lady, who was Countess of Biscay, after the decease of her father, 'Madam, save yourself; for king Don Pedro, if he may get you, will cause you to die, or else put you in prison, he is so sore displeased with you; because he saith you report and bear witness that he caused the queen, his wife, to die on her bed, who was sister to the Duke of Bourbon, and to the French queen; and your words, he saith, are believed rather than another, because you were privy of her chamber.' And for this cause, the lady Florence, Countess of Biscay, departed out of her country with a small company. As the common usage is to fly from death as soon as men can, so she went into the country of the Basques, and passed through it, and so came hither to Orthes, to the count, and shewed him all her adventure*. The count, who

* See Note [3] and Map.

had ever pity of ladies and damosels, retained her, and so she abode with the Lady of Corasse, a great lady of his country. As then, this Sir Peter of Bierne, his brother, was a young knight, and had not then this usage to rise of nights as he doth now. The count loved him well, and married him to this lady, and recovered her lands; and so this Sir Peter had, by this lady, a son and a daughter, but they be with their mother in Castile, who be as yet but young; therefore the lady would not leave them with their father."

"Ah, Saint Mary," quoth I, "how did Sir Peter of Bierne take this fantasy first, that he dare not sleep alone in his chamber, and that when he is asleep riseth thus, and maketh all this business? These are things to be marvelled at."

"By my faith," quoth the squire, "he hath been often demanded thereof, but he saith he cannot tell whence it cometh. The first time that ever he did so, was a night after he had been a hunting on a day in the woods of Biscay, and chased a marvellous great bear; and the bear had slain four of his hounds, and hurt divers, so that none durst come near him. Then this Sir Peter took a sword of Bourdeaux, and came in great ire because of his hounds; and assailed the bear, and fought long with him, and was in great peril, and took great pain ere he could overcome him. Finally, he slew the bear, and returned to his lodging at the castle of Languedudon, in Biscay, and made the bear to be brought with him. Every man had marvel of the greatness of the beast, and of the hardiness of the knight how he durst assail the bear. And when the Countess of Biscay, his wife, saw the bear, she fell into a swoon, and had great dolour, and so she

was borne into her chamber, and so all that day, the night after, and the next day, she was sore discomfitted, and would not shew what she ailed. On the third day, she said to her husband, 'Sir, I shall not be whole till I have been a pilgrimage at St. James's; Sir, I pray you give me leave to go thither, and to have with me my son, and Adrian, my daughter.' Her husband agreed thereto;—she took all her gold, jewels, and treasure with her, for she thought never to return again, whereof her husband took no heed. So the lady did her pilgrimage, and made an errand to go and see the king of Castile, her cousin, and the queen. They made her good cheer, and there she is yet, and will not return again, nor send her children. And so thus the next night that this Sir Peter had chased the bear and slain him, while he slept in his bed this fantasy took him. And it was said, that the countess, his wife, knew well, as soon as she saw the bear, that it was the same that her father did once chase; and in his chasing he heard a voice, and saw nothing, that said to him 'Thou chasest me, and I would thee no hurt, therefore thou shalt die an evil death.' Of this the lady had remembrance when she saw the bear, by that which she had heard her father say before. And she remembered well how king Don Pedro strake off her father's head without any cause, and in likewise she feared for her husband; and yet she saith and maintaineth that he shall die of an evil death, and that he doth nothing as yet to that he shall do hereafter.

"Now, Sir, I have shewed you of this Sir Peter of Bierne, as ye have demanded of me; and this is a true tale, for thus it is, and thus it befel. How think ye, Sir, thereby?"

And I, who mused on the great marvel, said, "Sir, I believe it well that it is as ye have said. Sir, we find in old writing that anciently such as were called gods and goddesses, at their pleasure would change and transform men into beasts and into fowls, and in likewise women. And it might be so that this bear was, before, some knight chasing in the forest of Biscay; and, peradventure, displeased at that time some god or goddess, whereby he was transformed into a bear to do there as penance, as anciently Actæon was into an hart."

"Actæon?" quoth the squire; "I pray ye shew me that story, I would fain hear it."

"Sir," quoth I, "according to the ancient writings, we find how Actæon was a jolly and expert knight, and loved the sport of hunting above all games. And on a day he chased in the woods, and an hart rose before him marvellous great and fair. He hunted him all the day, and lost all his company, servants, and hounds; and he was right desirous to follow his prey, and followed the fewe of the hart till he came into a little meadow closed round about with woods and high trees. And in the meadow there was a fair fountain, in the which Diana, Goddess of Chastity, was baining herself, and her damsels about her. The knight came suddenly on them ere he was ware, and he was so far forward that he could not go back. And the damsels were abashed to see a stranger, and ran to their lady and told her, who was ashamed because she was naked. And when she saw the knight, she said—"Actæon, they that sent thee hither loved thee but little; I will not that when thou art gone hence into other places, thou shalt report that thou hast seen me baining naked, and my damsels; and for the

outrage that thou hast done thou mayst have penance. Therefore I will that thou be transformed into the likeness of the same hart that thou hast chased all this day.' And incontinent Actæon was turned into an hart, who naturally loveth the water. In likewise it might be of the bear of Biscay; and how that the lady knew, peradventure, more than she would speak of at that time, therefore she ought to be excused."

The squire answered and said—"Sir, it may well be." Then we left our talking for that time. [10]

CAP. V.

OF THE STATE, OR ORDONANCE, OF THE COUNT OF FOIX:—SPECIALLY OF THE GREAT SOLEMNITY THAT HE MADE AT THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS.

A.D. 1388–9.

Of the estate and order of the Count of Foix, cannot be too much spoken or praised. For the season that I was at Orthes, I found him such, and much more than I can speak of; but while I was there, I saw and heard many things that turned me to great pleasure. Among other solemnities that the Count of Foix kept on the high feasts of the year, he kept ever the feast of St. Nicholas in great solemnity, he and all his land, as great as the feast of Easter. And this was shewed me by a squire of his house the third day that I came hither, and I saw it myself right well apparent, for I was there on the same day.

First, all the clergy of the town of Orthes, and all the people, men, women, and children, with procession, came to the castle to fetch the count, who, all a foot, departed from his castle, and went with the clergy a procession to the church of St. Nicholas, and there the clergy sang a psalm of the Psalter; *Benedictus dominus Deus meus, qui docet manus meas*

ad prælium, et digitos meos ad bellum, &c. *. And when the psalm was sung, then they began to sing as they did on Christmas-day, or Easter-day, in the Pope's chapel, or the French king's; for he had with him many singers. The Bishop of Pamiers chanted the mass: and there I heard as good playing at organs as ever I heard in any place. To speak briefly and according to reason, the Count of Foix was right perfect in all things; and as sage and as perceiving as any high prince in his days. There was none could compare with him, in wit, honour, or in largess.

And at the feasts of Christmas, which he kept ever right solemnly, came to his house many knights and squires of Gascony, and to every man he made good cheer. And I saw, on Christmas day, sitting at his board, four bishops of his country, two Clementines, and two Urbanists. [11] The Bishop of Pamiers, and the Bishop of Lescar, Clementines, they sat highest. Then the Bishop of Ayre, and the Bishop of Rou, Urbanists. Then sat the Count of Foix, and then the Viscount of Roquebertin of Gascony, and the Viscount of Brunequell, the Viscount of Gousserant, and a knight of England, of the Duke of Lancaster's, who, as then, lay at Narbonne. The duke had sent him thither; and the knight was called Sir William Willoughby. And, at another table, sat five abbots, and two knights of Arragon, called Sir Raymond de Mount Florentine, and Sir Martin de Ruane. And, at another table, sat knights and squires

* In the English version, *Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight*: a very appropriate thanksgiving, it must be confessed, for a baron of the feudal ages.—Ed.

of Gascony and of Bigore*. And, at other tables, knights of Bierne, a great number. And, among the chief stewards of the hall was Sir Espagne de Lyon; in whose company I had rode from Carcassone. And the count's two bastard brethren served at the table, Sir Ernalton Guillaume, and Sir Peter of Bierne; and the count's two sons, Sir Juan of Lescar was sewer, and Sir Gratian bare his cup. And there were many minstrels, as well of his own, as of strangers, and each of them did their devoir in their faculties. The same day the Count of Foix gave to heralds and minstrels the sum of five hundred francs; and he gave to the Duke of Touraine's minstrels gowns of cloth of gold furred with ermines, valued at two hundred francs. This dinner endured four hours. [12]

Thus I am glad to speak of the Count of Foix, for I was there in his house a twelve weeks, and was well entreated in all things. And while I was there, I might learn and hear tidings of all countries. And also the gentle knight Sir Espagne de Lyon, with whom I had entered the country, he caused me to be acquainted with knights and squires, such as could declare to me any thing I could demand.

And during these feasts of Christmas, I saw the Bourge of Spain, who laid the wood and the ass on the fire together, of whom Sir Espagne de Lyon shewed of his force; and I was glad to see him. And the Count of Foix made him good semblant. And I acquainted myself with many other knights and squires,

* The chief of these are enumerated by name in the original; but as they do not, in any particular manner, bear either upon the story, or the picture of the times, I have thought it as well to omit the mere dry list of proper names.—Ed.

as well of England, (of the Duke of Lancaster's house,) as of Arragon, of Bigore, of Gascony, and of Bierne. And on a day I saw a squire of Gascony, called the Bastot of Maulyon, a man of a fifty years of age, an expert man of arms, and a hardy by seeming*: he alighted at my lodging in Orthes, at the sign of the Moon at Ernalton de Pyne's, and he brought with him his sumners and carriages, as though he had been a great baron; and was served, both he and his servants, in silver vessel. And when I heard his name, and saw the Count of Foix, and every man do him so much honour, then I demanded of Sir Espagne de Lyon whether this were not the squire that he had told me of as having departed from the castle of Trygalot, when the Duke of Anjou lay at siege before Malvoisin. And he told me that it was,—and that he was a good man at arms, and a good captain. And so then I fell in acquaintance with him, for he was lodged there as I was. And a cousin of his, called Ernalton, captain of Carlat in Auvergne, with whom I was well acquainted, helped me to be acquainted with him; and in likewise so did the Bourge of Spain.

And at a time as we were talking and devising of arms, sitting by the fire abiding for midnight, that the Count should go to supper, then this squire's cousin began to reckon up his life, and of the deeds of arms that he had been at; saying how he had endured as much loss as profit. Then he demanded of me, and said, "Sir John, have ye in your history any thing of these matters that I speak of?"

And I answered and said, "I could not tell until I heard them. Shew forth your matter, and I will

* i.e. *in appearance; or, to judge by his appearance.*

gladly hear you; for peradventure I have heard somewhat, but not all*." Then this squire, in a frank and courteous manner, did shew to me all the deeds of arms which he had seen, even from when he was as yet but a youngling, and bare his first armour under the Captal of Buch, at Poitiers, even to the present time. And he had served much, and seen great deeds of arms in all countries, in France, and in Germany, and in Pruce, [Prussia] and in Brittanny, and Almain, and Castile; and, in a word, in all countries where there had been great deeds of arms for the last thirty years, there had this squire been. For he had followed the Captal of Buch, of whom I have before spoken, who was one of the most renowned and valiant captains in all the wars which had fallen out between France and England, as well other valiant leaders since. And this squire showed to me, in especial, of the discomfiture of the Navarrois, under the Captal of Buch, by the Constable du Guesclin and the Frenchmen, as I have before set forth in the former books of this history. And he shewed to me also many things of the wars in Castile and in Arragon, which, as yet, I did not know; or of the which I had heard but imperfectly. And no one could better shew me of these than this squire, for he had served in all these wars; and was at Aljabarota, where the Portugals gained so great a victory over them of Castile; and all this did pleasure and delight me much, for it was always my chief delight to get increase of the matter of my history, specially from such as had themselves seen the things which they shewed to me; and this squire shewed to me nothing but what was of his own know-

* See note at the end of the chapter.

ledge. And when he had made an end, he said; "Sir John, I have thus held you with talking to pass away the night; howbeit, Sir, all that I have said is true."

"Sir," quoth I, "with all my heart I thank you. Sir, I trust your sayings shall not be lost; for, Sir, an God suffer me to return to my own country, all that I have heard you say, and all that I have seen and found in my voyage, I shall put it in remembrance, in the noble chronicle that the Count of Blois hath set me to work upon. For I shall write it, and chronicle it by the grace of God, to the intent that it shall be in perpetual remembrance."

Then the Bourge of Compeigne, called Ernalton, began to speak, and would gladly that I should perceive by him that he would that I should record his life, and of the Bourge English, his brother; and how they had done in Auvergne and other places. But, as then, they had no leisure, for the watch of the castle sounded to summon all men that were in the town to come up to the castle to sup with the Count of Foix. Then these two squires made them ready, and lighted up torches, and so we went up to the castle, and so did all other knights and squires that were lodged in the town.

[NOTE.—The communications made to Froissart by the Bastot of Maulyon, in this conversation, are given in the original, immediately after the words "but not all;" where I have placed a reference. They are at great length, and given with that minute precision of dialogue upon which I have before remarked, as evidencing notes of them having been committed to paper very immediately after the conversation passing. He even notices where they

break off to take wine. As, however, the adventures of the Bastot of Maulyon, though very entertaining in themselves, and very spiritedly given, are wholly episodical, I have thought it better to retrench them altogether. I have availed myself, however, of some parts of the portraiture contained in them, in the Historical Notice of the Companions, which the reader will find prefixed to the Story of Aymergot Marcel.—Ed.]

CAP. VI.

HOW A SPIRIT, CALLED ORTHON, SERVED THE LORD OF CORASSE A LONG TIME; AND BROUGHT HIM TIDINGS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

A.D. 1388. IT is a great marvel to consider one thing, the which was shewed me in the Count of Foix's house, at Orthes; of the same squire that informed me of the business at Aljubarota. He shewed me one thing that I have oftentimes thought on since, and shall do as long as I live.

As this squire told me, of truth the next day after the battle was fought, at Aljabarota, the Count of Foix knew it; whereof I had great marvel. For the said Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, the count was very pensive, and so sad of cheer, that no man could hear a word of him. And all the same three days he would not issue out of his chamber, nor speak to any man though they were never so near about him. And on the Tuesday at night he called to him his brother Sir Ernaut Guillaume, and said to him with a soft voice:

"Our men have had to do; whereof I am sorry; for it is come of them by their voyage as I said before they departed."

Ernaut Guillaume, who was a sage knight, and knew right well his brother's conditions, stood still;

and gave none answer. And then the count, who thought to declare his mind more plainly, (for long he had borne the trouble thereof in his heart,) spake again more high than he did before, and said:

"By God, Sir Ernaut, it is as I say; and shortly ye shall hear tidings thereof: But the country of Bierne, this hundred year, never lost such a loss at no journey as it hath done now in Portugal."

Divers knights and squires that were there present, and heard him say so, stood still, and durst not speak. But they remembered his words; and within a ten days after they knew the truth thereof by such as had been at the business; and there they shewed every thing as it was fortuned at Aljubarota. Then the count renewed again his dolour, and all the country were in sorrow, for they had lost their parents, brethren, children, and friends.

"Saint Mary!" quoth I to the squire that shewed me this tale, "How is it that the Count of Foix could know on one day what was done within a day or two before, being so far off?"

"By my faith, Sir," quoth he, "as it appeared, well he knew it."

"Then he is a diviner," quoth I, "or else he hath messengers that flyeth with the wind, or he must needs have some craft."

The squire began to laugh, and said, "Surely he must know it by some art of necromancy or otherwise. To say the truth, we cannot tell how it is but by our imaginations."

"Sir," quoth I, "such magination as ye have therein, if it please you to shew me, I would be glad thereof; and if it be such a thing as ought to be

secret, I shall not publish it, nor as long as I am in this country I shall never speak word thereof."

"I pray you thereof," quoth the squire, "for I would not it should be known that I should speak thereof; but I shall shew you as divers men speak secretly when they be together as friends." Then he drew me apart into a corner of the chapel at Orthes, and began his tale, and said:—

A.D. 1368. "It is well a twenty years past, that there was in this country a Baron, called Raymond, Lord of Corasse, which is a seven leagues from this town of Orthes. This Lord of Corasse had, the same time, a plea at Avignon before the pope, for the dismes [tithes] of his church, against a clerk-curate there, the which priest was of Catalonia. He was a great clerk, and claimed to have a right of the dismes of the town of Corasse, which was valued to a hundred florins by the year; and the right that he had he shewed and proved it. And by sentence definitive, Pope Urban the Fifth, in consistory general, condemned the knight and gave judgment with the priest. And of this last judgment he had letters of the pope for his possession, and so rode till he came into Bierne, and there shewed his letters and rules of the pope for the possession of his dismes. The Lord of Corasse had great indignation at this priest, and came to him, and said, 'Master Peter,' or, 'Master Martin,' as his name was, 'thinkest thou that by reason of thy letters that I will lose mine heritage? Be not so hardy that thou take any thing that is mine; if thou dost, it shall cost thee thy life. Go thy way into some other place to get thee a benefice, for of mine heritage thou gettest no part; and once for always I

defend thee.' The clerk doubted [feared] the knight; for he was a cruel man, therefore he durst not persevere. Then he thought to return to Avignon, as he did; but, when he departed, he came to the knight, the Lord of Corasse, and said:

"Sir, by force and not by right, ye take from me the right of my church, wherein ye greatly hurt your conscience. I am not so strong in this country as ye be; but, Sir, know for truth, that as soon as I may, I shall send to you such a champion whom ye shall doubt more than me."

The knight, who doubted nothing his threatenings, said, "God be with thee; do what thou mayest. I doubt no more death than life; for all thy words, I will not lose mine heritage."

Thus the clerk parted from the Lord of Corasse, and went, I cannot tell whether to Avignon or into Catalonia; and forgot not the promise that he had made to the Lord of Corasse ere he departed. For afterward, when the knight thought least on him, about a three months after, as the knight laid on a night abed in his castle of Corasse, with the lady his wife, there came to him messengers invisible, and made marvellous tempest and noise in the castle, that it seemed as though the castle should have fallen down; and struck great strokes at his chamber-door, that the good lady, his wife, was sore afraid. The knight heard all, but he spake no word thereof, because he would shew no abashed courage; for he was hardy to abide all adventures. This noise and tempest was in sundry places of the castle, and endured a long space, and at last ceased for that night.

Then the next morning, all the servants of the house came to the lord when he was risen, and said,

"Sir, have ye not heard this night, that, we have done?"

The lord dissembled, and said "No; I heard nothing.—What have you heard?"

Then they shewed him what noise they had heard, and how all the vessels in the kitchen were overturned. Then the lord began to laugh, and said, "Yea, Sirs, ye dreamed! It was nothing but the wind."

"In the name of God," quoth the lady, "I heard it well."

The next night there was as great noise and greater, and such strokes given at his chamber-door and windows, as if all should have been broken in pieces. The knight started up out of his bed, and would not be hindred to demand who was at his chamber-door at that time of the night? And anon he was answered by a voice that said, "I am here."

Quoth the knight, "Who sent thee hither?"

"The clerk of Catalonia sent me hither," quoth the voice, "to whom thou dost great wrong; for thou hast taken from him the rights of his benefice. I will not leave thee in rest till thou hast made him a good accompt, so that he be pleased."

Quoth the knight, "What is thy name, that art so good a messenger?"

"I am called Orthon."

"Orthon," quoth the knight, "the service of a clerk is little profit for thee; he will put thee to much pain if thou believe him; I pray thee leave him, and come and serve me, and I shall give thee good thanks."

The spirit was ready to answer, for it was in love with the knight, and said, "Wouldst thou fayne have my service?"

"Yea, truly," quoth the Knight, "so thou do no hurt to any person in this house."

"No more I will do," quoth Orthon, "for I have no power to do any other evil, but to awake thee out of thy sleep, or some other."

"Well," quoth the knight, "do as I tell thee, and we shall soon agree, and leave the evil clerk; for there is no good thing in him, but to put thee to pain; therefore come and serve me."

"Well," quoth Orthon, "and since thou wilt have me, we are agreed."

So this spirit loved so the knight, that oftentimes it would come and visit him while he lay in his bed asleep; and either pull him by the ear, or else strike at his chamber-door or window to awake him. And when the knight awoke, then he would say, "Orthon, let me sleep."

"Nay," quoth the spirit, "that will I not do till I have shewed thee such tidings as are fallen of late."

The lady, the knight's wife, would be so sore afraid that her hair would stand up; and she would hide herself under the cloaths. Then the knight would say, "Why, what tidings hast thou brought me?"

Quoth Orthon, "I am come out of England, or out of Hungary, or some other place; and yesterday I came thence, and such things are fallen, or such other."

So thus the Lord of Corasse knew by Orthon every thing that was done in any part of the world: And in this case he continued a five years, and could not keep his own counsel, but at last discovered it to the Count of Foix. I shall shew you how.

The first year the Lord of Corasse came on a day to Orthes to the Count of Foix, and said to him—

"Sir, such things are done in England, or in Scotland, or in Germany, or in any other country." And ever the Count of Foix found his sayings true, and had great marvel how he should know such things so shortly. And on a time the Count of Foix examined him so straightly, that the Lord of Corasse shewed him altogether how he knew it, and how the spirit had come to him first. When the Count of Foix heard that, he was joyful, and said, "Sir of Corasse, keep the spirit well in your love. I would I had such a messenger; it costeth you nothing, and ye know by it every thing that is done in the world." The knight answered and said, "Sir, that is true." Thus the Lord of Corasse was served with Orthon a long season.

I cannot say whether this spirit had any more masters or not, but every week twice or thrice it would come and visit the Lord of Corasse, and would shew him such tidings of any thing that was fallen, from where it came. And ever the Lord of Corasse, when he knew of any thing, he wrote thereof ever to the Count of Foix, who had great joy thereof; for he was the lord in the world that most desired to hear news out of strange places. And on a time the Lord of Corasse was with the Count of Foix; and the count demanded of him, and said, "Sir of Corasse, did ye ever as yet see your messenger?"

"Nay, surely, Sir," quoth the knight, "nor I never desired it."

"That is marvel," quoth the count, "and if I were as well acquainted with the spirit as ye be, I would have desired to have seen it: wherefore I pray you desire of it, and then tell me what form and fashion it is of. I have heard you say how it speaketh as good Gascon as either you or I."

"Truly, Sir," quoth the knight, "so it is. Orthon speaketh as well and as fair as any of us both do; and surely, Sir, since ye counsel me, I shall do my pain to see it, an I can."

And so, on a night, as he lay in his bed with the lady his wife, who was so used to hear Orthon that she was no more afraid of it; then came Orthon and pulled the lord by the ear, who was fast asleep, and therewith he awoke, and asked who was there? "*I* am here," quoth Orthon. Then he demanded, "From whence comest thou now?"

"I come," quoth Orthon, "from Prague, in Bohemia."

"How far is that hence?" quoth the knight.

"A threescore days' journey."

"And art thou come thence so soon?"

"Yea, truly," replied Orthon, I come as fast as the wind, or faster."

"Hast thou then wings?" quoth the knight.

"Nay, truly."

"How canst thou fly so fast?"

"Ye have nothing to do to know that;" quoth Orthon.

"No," quoth the knight, "I would gladly see thee to know what form thou art of."

Quoth Orthon, "Ye have nothing to do to know; it sufficeth you to hear me, and I to shew you tidings."

"In faith," quoth the knight, "I would love thee much better, an I might see thee once."

"Well, Sir," quoth Orthon, "since ye have so great a desire to see me, the first thing that ye see to-morrow when ye rise out of your bed, the same shall be I."

"That is sufficient," quoth the lord; "go thy way. I give thee leave to depart for this night."

And the next morning the lord rose, and the lady his wife was so afraid that she durst not rise, but feigned herself sick, and said she would not rise. Her husband would have had her to have risen, "Sir," quoth she, "then I shall see the spirit; and I would not see it by my good will."

"Well," quoth the knight, "I would gladly see it;" and so he arose fair and early out of his bed, and sat down on his bed-side, expecting to have seen Orthon in his own proper form; but he saw nothing whereby he might say—"Lo, yonder is Orthon!"

So that day passed and the next night came; and when the knight was in his bed, Orthon came and began to speak, as it was accustomed. "Go thy way," quoth the knight, "thou art but a liar. Thou promisest that I should have seen thee, and it was not so."

"No?" quoth Orthon, "and I yet shewed myself to thee."

"That is not so," quoth the lord.

"Why," quoth Orthon, "when you rose out of your bed, saw you nothing?"

Then the lord studied a little, and advised himself well. "Yes, truly," saith the knight, "Now I remember me, as I sat on my bed's side, thinking on thee, I saw two straws, on the pavement, tumbling one upon the other."

"That same was I," quoth Orthon, "into that form did I put myself as then."

"That is not enough to me," quoth the lord, "I pray thee put thyself into some other form, that I may better see and know thee."

"Well," quoth Orthon, "ye will do so much that ye will lose me, and I go from you, for you desire too much of me."

"Nay," quoth the knight, "thou shalt not go from me; let me see thee once and I will desire no more."

"Well," quoth Orthon, "Ye shall see me to-morrow; take heed the first thing that ye see after ye be out of your chamber, it shall be I."

"Well," quoth the knight, "I am then content; go thy way, let me sleep."

And so Orthon departed; and the next morning the lord arose, and issued out of the chamber, and went to a window, and looked down into the court of the castle, and cast about his eyes. And the first thing he saw was a sow, the greatest that ever he saw; and she seemed to be so lean and evil-favoured that there was nothing on her but the skin and the bones, with long ears, and a long lean snout. The Lord of Corasse had marvel of that lean sow, and was weary of the sight of her, and commanded his men to fetch his hounds, and said, "Let the dogs hunt her to death and devour her." His servants opened the kennels and let out his hounds, and did set them on this sow. And at the last the sow made a great cry, and looked up to the Lord of Corasse, as he looked out at a window; and so suddenly vanished away, no man wist how. Then the Lord of Corasse entered into his chamber right pensive, and then he remembered him of Orthon his messenger, and said, "I repent me that I set my hounds on the sow; it is an adventure an' ever I hear any more of the spirit; for for it said to me oftentimes that if I displeased it I should hear its voice no more."

The lord said truth, for never after did it come into

the castle of Corasse; and also the knight died the same year next following.

"Lo, Sir," quoth the squire, "thus I have shewed you the life of the Spirit Orthon, and how a season it served the Lord of Corasse with new tidings."

"It is true, Sir," quoth I, "but now to your first purpose. Is the Count of Foix served with such a messenger?"

"Surely," quoth the squire, "it is the imagination of many that he hath such messengers, for there is nothing done in any place but an he set his mind thereto he will know it, and that when men think least thereof. And so did he when the good knights and squires of this country were slain in Portugal. Some say the knowledge of such things hath done him much profit, for an there be but the value of a spoon lost in his house, anon he will know where it is."

So then I took leave of the squire and went to other company, but I bare well away his tale [13].

CAP. VII.

OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF BERRY, WITH THE DAUGHTER OF THE COUNT OF BOULOGNE.

A. D. 1389. THE Duke of Berry, who had married the Lady Jane of Armagnac to his first wife, after she was deceased, had great imagination to be married again, and that he well shewed; for when he saw how he had missed of the Duke of Lancaster, he set clerks to write, and sent messengers to the Count Gaston of Foix, who had the keeping of the Count of Bulloigne's daughter for more than the space of nine years. And, because the Duke of Berry could not come to this marriage, but by danger of the Count of Foix; for neither for pope, father, mother, nor friend the damsel had, the count would do nothing without it were his own pleasure. Then the Duke of Berry desired effectuously the French king, his nephew, and the Duke of Burgundy, his brother, to help and assist him in this marriage *.

The French king laughed, and had good sport of the Duke of Berry, his uncle, because he was old and so hot in love, and said to him, "Fair uncle, this young maiden is not as yet twelve years of age and ye be sixty; by my faith it is great folly for you to think thereof. Speak for my cousin John, your son, he is young, the matter is more meet for him than for you."

* For the royal family of France at this period, see Note [5].

"Sir," quoth the duke, "I have spoken for my son, but the Count of Foix will in no wise agree thereto; because my son is of the blood of them of Armagnac, who be at war together, and have been long*."

"Well, fair uncle," quoth the king, "seeing ye have so great an affection there, I shall aid ye as much as I may."

It was not long after but that the king, and the Duke of Burgundy, and the Duke of Berry, ordained each severally, ambassadors, being sage and valiant knights, to go from their behalf in voyage to the Count of Foix to desire to have the young lady in marriage to the Duke of Berry. These lords, being five in number, departed, and appointed to meet together at Avignon, with Pope Clement. About Candlemas they departed, and took the way to Nismes, and so to Avignon. They passed by Montpelier, and rode, by small journeys and great expence, and passed by Besieres and came to Carcassone, and there they found Sir Lewis of Sancere, Marshal of France, who received them in good cheer, and he shewed them much of the Count of Foix's estate, for he had been there within two months before. Then they departed from Carcassone, and went to Thoulouse and there rested: And then they sent messengers to the Count of Foix at Orthes in Bierne, and there began to treat for this marriage. But it was far off, for at the beginning the Count of Foix was cold, because the Duke of Lancaster had sent to him to have the same lady for his son, the Lord Henry, Earl of Derby†. By reason of this long tarrying and delaying of this treaty, it

* See Note [4].

† Afterwards Henry IV. of England.

was said and noised, that the marriage should not be; and all their answers that they had from the Count of Foix, they sent weekly to the Duke of Berry, who was in Auvergne. And the duke, who had none other desire but to bring the matter about, wrote often to them again by fresh messengers, desiring them not to cease till they had brought the matter to pass. And the Count of Foix, who was sage and subtle, saw well the ardent desire that the Duke of Berry had; and the hotter that he was, the colder was he. And he handled the matter so wisely that, by the full agreement of all parties, and yet sore desired thereto, he had thirty thousand francs for the charges of the lady's expences for the years she had been with him. If he had more demanded, more he should have had; but he did it so to have thanks of the Duke of Berry, and that he should perceive that he had done something for him.

When this matter was concluded, and all parties agreed, the Count of Foix sent his cousin, the lady, to Morlens, accompanied with five hundred spears; and in the fields the lady was delivered to the French ambassadors on the behalf of the Duke of Berry. There was Sir Lewis of Sancere, with a five hundred spears, and other company, who received the lady, and there took their leave and departed. They of Foix returned, and the Frenchmen led forth the lady. The Duke of Berry had sent to her chairs and chariots richly garnished, and horse and hackneys, and apparel for her body and for her head, as fresh and as rich as though it had been for the French queen. Thus they rode forth, and I, Sir John Froissart, author of this book, rode in their company: for oftentimes, when I would have taken leave of the Count of Foix, he

would say to me how I had no need to make so great a haste, and bade me when I would return to go in good company, so I returned in this said company.

This young duchess of Berry (for so I will name her from henceforth,) and all her company rode so long, that they came near to Avignon, there she rested at a town called Villeneuve, without the town of Avignon, at a house of the Pope's. And the next day, about nine of the clock, all the cardinals that were there at the time met with her, and so passed the bridge of Rosny, in great estate; the lady riding on a white palfrey, which the pope had sent to her. Then she came to the pope's palace in Avignon, and there alighted, and went to see the pope, who sat in consistory in a chair pontifical. The pope kissed her mouth, because of lineage *. Then the duchess and her company went to dinner with many of the cardinals, at the house of the cardinal of Turin, near to the pope's palace. This was on a Wednesday, and the next day they all dined at the same house again. I may well say that the coming of this lady to Avignon cost the pope the sum of ten thousand francs.

The Friday she supped in the palace, and took her leave of the pope, and the Saturday she departed and rode to Orange, and there lay all night; for her cousin-germain was princess thereof. The Sunday she departed, and passed to Valence, and then to Vienne, and so to Lyon sur le Rhone, and there rested two days. Then from thence to Bresle, and so entered the county of Forests, and passed through the country, and so came to La Palesse, in Bourbonais, and so to

* Clement VII., who was a near kinsman of the bride. See Note [5] and [11].

Quissy, then to Hanche, and so to Ryom, in Auvergne; and there rested two days, ere the Duke of Berry came thither.

He came there on Whitsun-even; and, on Whitsunday, by times, he married the lady. This was a noble wedding, and a great feast. There was the Count of Bulloigne, the Count d'Estampes, and the Count Dolphin of Auvergne. This feast and jousts endured four days. All this, I, Sir John Froissart, author of this book, saw with mine eyen; for I was there present.

[NOTE.—This is the termination of the Third Book of Froissart, according to the hypothesis concerning these divisions, broached by M. de St. Palaye, in his Essay on Froissart's History. (Vide the previous account of Froissart). I shall, however, in order to conclude the Story of Gaston de Foix, extract from his next book the account he gives of the interview between Charles VI. and Gaston de Foix at Thoulouse; and, subsequently, of the Count's death.—ED.]

CAP. VIII.

OF THE HOMAGE OF THE COUNT OF FOIX, TO THE FRENCH KING.

A.D. 1399. Now, when the French king saw that he had truce with England for three years, and that the feast of his marriage was accomplished*, he had then imagination to go and visit his realm, specially the outward marches of Languedoc. For, the Lord de la Rivière and Sir John Mercier, who were as then chief of his privy council, they exhorted him to go to Avignon, to see pope Clement and the cardinals, who desired to see him, and also to go to Thoulouse. For they said to the king, that a king in his youth ought to visit his realm, and to know his people, and to learn how they be governed; the which should be greatly to his profit, and the better to be beloved of all his subjects. The king lightly inclined to their counsels, for he had desire to travel and see new things. And the Lord de la Rivière, who was but newly come out of those marches, heard great complaints of the people of Thoulouse, of Carcassonne, and of Beaucaire; and they greatly desired to see the king. For they had been sore charged

* With Isabel de Bavière. The fêtes in celebration of this wedding were among the most splendid of those times. See Note [5].

with taxes and aids by the Duke of Berry, by the information of a servant of his called Betysache, who had pity of no man; he so pillaged the people that nothing was left. Therefore the Lord de la Rivière counselled the king to go thither to provide some remedy; and also that the king should send for the Count of Foix to come to him at Thoulouse. The king made him ready to go thither; and sent afore all the way that provision should be made for his coming. And he rode so long by his journeys, that he visited the country, and kept not the highways; and, at last, he came to Thoulouse. And the burgesses there who all desired to see the king, received him joyfully; and met the king without the town, all in a livery, and so brought him with great solemnity to the castle of Thoulouse.

When the king had been there three days, he was counselled to send for the Count of Foix, who was come out of Bierne into the county of Foix, four leagues from Thoulouse; for he knew of the king's state and ordinance. The marshal of France and the Lord de la Rivière were appointed to go for the Count of Foix. The Count of Foix well knew of their coming, and received them nobly for the love of the king; and also he knew the lords well, for he had seen them before. Sir Lewis of Saucere, (the marshal,) had the word, and said, "Sir, my Lord of Foix, the king, our Sovereign Lord, hath sent us to you commanding you to come to see him at Thoulouse, or else he will come so far he will come to see you in your own country, for he hath great desire to see you."

The Count of Foix answered, and said, "Sir Lewis, I would not that the king had so much travail to see me, it were fitter that I should go to him: wherefore,

if it please ye, ye shall shew him that I shall be at Thoulouse within four days."

"That is well, Sir," quoth they, "we shall return and shew him these tidings from ye." They tarried there that day and night; and the count devised with them sagely and craftily; for he was a man, by reason of his fair language, to draw out by one means or other, the secrets of one's heart. The next day they returned to Thoulouse; and found the king playing at chess with the Duke of Bourbon, his uncle.

Then the king demanded of them aloud, and said, "Sirs, how say ye, will the count come or not?" "Yes, Sir," quoth the Lord de la Rivière; "he hath apredilection to see your grace; he will be here within four days." "Well," quoth the king, "we shall be glad to see him."

The day that the Count of Foix had appointed, he entered into Thoulouse, with six hundred horses, and well accompanied with knights and squires. He had with him, among many other valiant knights and squires, his two bastard sons, Sir John and Sir Gratian. The intention of the count was to inherit to those sons the most part of all the lands of Bierne; of the which land he might do therewith at his pleasure, holding of no man but of God. Then the count took his lodging at the Freres Preachers, and there kept his house; and his men lay as near thereabout as might be. The burgesses of Thoulouse made him good cheer, for they loved him well, for he had always been their good neighbour and treatable; for he never suffered any of his men to do them any displeasure nor violence, wherefore they loved him much the better. They gave him many fair presents of wine and other things, so that he was well content. He entered into Thou-

louse when it was late at night. The next day, about ten o'clock, he took his horse, and such other of his company as pleased him, more than two hundred knights and squires, all men of honour; and in that estate he rode along through the streets to the castle where the king was. Then he alighted in the first court entering into the castle. Then the count ascended the steps into the great hall; the French king was come out of his chamber into the hall, and there tarried for the count; for he had great liking to see him, for the great valour and renown that ran on him. The Count of Foix, who was a goodly prince, and of a formal stature, bare-headed entered into the hall, and when he saw the king and the other lords of France, his brother and his uncle, he made his reverence to the king, and to none other, and kneeled down on his one knee. Then he arose, and passed forward, and at the third time he kneeled near to the king. The king took him by the hand and embraced him; and took him up, and said, "Count of Foix, my fair cousin, you be right welcome; your coming greatly rejoices us." "Sir," quoth the count, "I thank your grace that it please ye to say so." Then the king and the count talked together, the which words I heard not all.

Then the king went to dinner. At the king's table, at the upper end, sat the Archbishop of Thoulouse, then the king*, and his uncle the Duke of Bourbon. Then next sat the Count of Foix, then Sir John of Bourbon, Earl of March and of Vendôme; at that table sat no more. This was a great dinner, and one stuffed of all things. And after dinner, and grace

* See Note [11.]

said, they took other pastimes in a great chamber; and hearing of instruments, whereof the Count of Foix greatly delighted. Then wine and spices were brought. The Count of Harcourt served the king of his spiced plate; and Sir Gerard de la Pierre served the Duke of Bourbon; and Sir Monaunt of Noailles, served the Count of Foix. Thus, about four o'clock, the count took leave of the king and of the other lords. He issued out of the hall, and in the court were his horses ready, and his men. The count mounted, and all such as accompanied him, and returned to his lodging and was well content with the cheer that had been made to him and his, and praised it much to his knights.

Then between the French king and the Count of Foix, there were divers treaties and appointments of amity, and the Marshal of France, and the Lord la Rivière, did their pain to help it forward. The Count of Foix made a dinner to the Duke of Touraine*, and the other great lords of France. This dinner was great and sumptuous, and sitting at the tables more than two hundred knights. And ere the dinner was fully ended, the French king, who had dined in the castle, said, "Go we thither," and so he did, with only twelve in his company. The Count of Foix was greatly rejoiced in that it pleased the French king to come to his lodging, and so was all the company. There was sport after dinner of wrestling, casting the bar, the stone, and the dart, between the Frenchmen and Gascons. Thus they passed the time till it was near hand night. Then the king and the other lords returned. The Count of Foix gave the same day to

* See Note appended to the end of this chapter, [14] as also Note [12.]

the king's knights and squires, and to the Duke of Touraine, and the Duke of Bourbon, more than threescore coursers, palfreys, and mulettes; all with white saddles ready dressed to appoint; also he gave the king's minstrels and others two hundred crowns of gold, and to the heralds and others two hundred crowns, so that every man praised the largess of the Count of Foix.

The fourth day after the count came to the king's palace, well accompanied with lords, and knights, and squires, to do homage for the county of Foix, reserving the county of Bierne. Before that there had been great treaties between the king and the Count of Foix, by means of the Lord de la Rivière and Sir John Mercier. It was said that the count desired of the king that his son, Juan de Foix, might, after the count's decease, inherit the county of Foix, by that the count, whenever he died, should leave to the king one hundred thousand francs in money. And the county of Bierne to be divided between Sir Gratian, his brother, and the heritance of the Viscount de Chateaubon. These assignments were in debate and difference between the count and his barons; therefore the French king, because the mean homage of the county of Foix was due to him, said to the count and to his barons—"I, Sirs, hold in my hand the homage of the land of Foix, and if so be in our days that it be vacant by the death of our good cousin, the Count of Foix, then we shall so determine and appoint by the advice of good counsel, that Juan of Foix, and all the other men of the county of Foix shall hold them content."

Those words well contented the Count of Foix and the other lords and knights of Foix that were then

resent. These ordinances written and sealed, the ount took his leave of the king, and of all the ther great lords. The next day he departed from Thoulouse, and left his purveyors behind him to pay or every thing. The count passed the river of Garonne, by the bridge of Thoulouse, and returned into is country by Mont de Marsan, and so to Orthes. Then he gave leave to every man to depart, saving his rdinary. It was shewed to me, and I believe it well, hat the coming of the French king into Thoulouse, nto Languedoc, and into the Marches, cost the Count f Foix more than threescore thousand francs. The ount was so liberal that whatsoever it cost him, he paid t willingly. [14]

CAP. IX.

OF THE DEATH OF THE COUNT GASTON OF FOIX.

A.D. 1390.

NOT long after this season died the noble and gentle Count of Foix, right marvellously: I shall shew you by what incident.

Truly, of all sports, this count loved hunting with hounds and greyhounds, and of them he was well provided, for always he had at his commandment more than sixteen hundred*. The count as then was at Bierne in the marches of Orthes, and went daily a hunting into the woods of Sanneterre, the way to Pampeluna, in Navarre. And the same day that he died, he had hunted and killed a bear, and by that time it was high noon: then the count demanded of them that were about him, where his dinner was provided. It was shewed him, at the hospital of Ryon, a two little miles from Orthes; and so thither he rode to dinner. And so alighted there and went into his chamber, the which was strewed with green herbs, and the walls set full of green boughs to make the chamber more fresh, for the air without was marvellously hot as in the month of May. When he felt that fresh air, he said, "Ah! this freshness doth me much good, for the day hath been very hot;" and so sat down in a chair. Then he talked and devised with Sir Espagne de Leon of his hounds, which had

* See Note [6.]

ran best; and, as he thus devised, there came into the chamber Sir Juan, his bastard son, and Sir Peter of Cabestan; and the tables were ready covered in the same chamber. Then water was brought forth to wash, and Ernalton of Spain took a silver bason, and Sir Tibault took the towel. Then the count rose, and put out his hands to wash, and as soon as the cold water fell on his fingers, he waxed pale in the face, and suddenly his heart failed him, and so fell down; and, in the falling, said—"Ah! I am but dead!—God have mercy on me!"

He never spake word after; howbeit, he died not so soon, but lay in great pain. The knights that were about him were sore abashed, and so was his son. They took him in their arms, and laid him on a bed, and covered him; trusting that he was but in a trance. The two knights that had given him water, to the intent that it should not be said that they had empoisoned him, took the bason and the ewer, and said, "Sirs, here in your presence behold here this water, the which we took essaye of, and yet will do;" and there they drank thereof, so that every man was content with them. They put into the count's mouth drink and spices, and other things comfortable, but all that availed nothing; for in less than an half an hour he was dead, and yielded up his breath sweetly. God of his pity, have mercy upon him!

All such as were there, were greatly troubled and abashed: then they closed the chamber-door to the intent that his death should not be so suddenly known abroad. The knights beheld Sir Juan, his son, who wept piteously, and wrung his hands, and the knights that were with him said—"Sir Juan, ye have now lost your father; we know well how he loved you

entirely; leave your sorrow, and leap on your horse and ride to Orthes. Take you possession of the castle, and of your father's treasure that is within it, before the death of your father be known abroad."

Sir Evan inclined to those words, and said—"Sirs, I thank you of your good counsel, the which I shall deserve, but then let me have some token that is on my father, or else I shall not be suffered to enter into the castle." "That is true, Sir," quoth they, "take some token from your father." Then he took a ring from his father's finger, and a knife that he bare always about him, which tokens the porter of the castle knew well: if he had not brought them he should not have entered in there.

Thus Sir Juan of Foix departed from the hospital of Ryon, and three with him; and rode in haste to the castle of Orthes. He rode through the town, no man mistrusted him; and so came to the castle, and called the porter, who answered and said—"Sir, what would ye have? Where is my lord, your father?—"He is at the hospital of Ryon," quoth the knight, "and hath sent me for certain things that are in his chamber, and then I must return again to him; and to the intent that thou shouldest believe me, behold here his ring and his knife." The porter opened a window and saw the tokens, which he knew well; then the porter opened the wicket and he entered in, and his varlets did set up his horses. As soon as he was entered, he said to the porter—"Close again the gate;" then he took the porter, and said—"Deliver me the keys, or else thou art but dead."

The porter was abashed, and said—"Sir, why say ye thus?"—"Because," quoth he, "my father is dead, and I will have possession of his treasure ere

any other come here." The porter obeyed, for he durst do none otherwise, and he loved Sir Juan as well as another. The knight knew right well where the treasure lay, which was in a strong tower, whereto belonged three strong doors, securely bolted and barred, and divers keys pertaining to them, which keys he could not find ready, for they were in a coffer of steel, and locked with a little key of steel, which the count ever bare on him wheresoever he went, in a little purse about his neck, which, after Sir Evan was departed from the hospital, was found by the knights that were about the dead corse: then they marvelled what key it should be that the count bare so privily about himself. Then the count's chaplain, called Sir Nicholas of Escail, who knew all the count's secrets, for the count loved him well, and ever when he went into his treasury-house he had his chaplain with him, said, as soon as he saw the key, "Ah! Sir Juan hath but lost his pain, for this is the key of a little coffer wherein are all the keys of the tower and coffer where all the count's treasure lyeth." Then the knights said, "Sir Nicholas go, and ride you to Orthes; and bear him the key." "Sirs," quoth he, "since ye give me the counsel, I shall do it; for it were better he had his father's treasure than another; and also I know well his father loved him entirely." Then he took his horse, and took the key, and rode to the castle of Orthes. And all that season Sir Juan was searching about for the keys, and could not find them, nor wist not how to get the tower-door open, it was so strong; and also he had no instruments to break it open wherewithal. And, in this mean season, the men of the town had soon knowledge, by varlets, or women that came from the hospital, how the count

should be dead. These were hard tidings to them, for the count was well-beloved with all his people. They of the town assembled together in the market-place, and said one to another, such as had seen Sir Juan pass through the town alone—"We have seen Sir Juan pass through the town alone towards the castle, and it seemed by his countenance he was not content: surely there is something amiss, for he was not wont to come home before his father!" Thus as they were communing together, there came into the town the count's chaplain; then the men of the town came about him, and demanded news of the count their lord; it hath been shewed us that he is dead—is it so or not?—"Nay," quoth the priest, "he is not dead, but he is sore sick, and I am come home before to cause things to be dressed for him; and then I must return again to him." And so, therewith he passed forth to the castle, and did so much that he entered, of whose coming Sir Juan had great joy; for without the key that he brought he could not have entered into the tower where the treasure was. Then the men of the town had great suspicion of the count's death, and said—"It is near hand night, and as yet we hear nothing of our lord, nor of none of his officers, and Sir Juan and his chaplain are entered into the castle suspiciously. Let us watch the castle this night, and to-morrow we shall hear other tidings; let us send secretly to the hospital, then shall we know how the matter goeth. Also, we know well the most part of the count's treasure is within the castle, and if it be sold, or stolen away by craft, we shall be blamed for it; ignorance will not excuse us." They all thought it was best for them so to do. Then the men of the town drew about the castle, and kept the gates

of the town surely, that none should enter or issue without license. Thus they watched all night; and, in the morning, they had a perfect knowledge of the death of their lord. Then every man, woman, and child, cried out and wept piteously, for the count was well beloved. Then the watchmen doubled, and increased in harness about the castle.

When Sir Juan of Foix saw the manner of the men of the town, and saw well how he was perceived, and that they knew the certainty of the death of his father; then he said to Sir Nicholas—"Sir, I have failed of my intent; I see well I cannot depart hence without license, the men of the town have knowledge of my father's death, and they assemble in great number before the castle. It behoveth me to humble myself to them, for force cannot avail me."

"Sir, ye say truth," quoth the priest, "ye shall win more by sweet and fair words than by rude and forward dealing;—go your way and speak with them."

Then Sir Juan went into a tower near to the gate, and opened a window over the bridge, in which tower was brought up till she was married the Lady Jane of Boulogne; who afterward was Duchess of Berry, as ye have heard in this history.

Sir Juan opened the window, and spake to them that were the principals of the town, who came on the bridge near to the window to hear what he would say. Then he spake aloud, and said:

"O ye good people of Orthes, I know well the cause of your assembly; it is not without a great occasion. Howbeit, I require you, as dearly as ye loved my lord and father, that ye be not displeased with me, though I have advanced myself to enter into this castle first, ere any other should enter, and to take pos-

session thereof, and of such goods as be within it; for I will do nothing but good. Ye know well my lord my father loved me as well and entirely as his own son, and would fain have found the ways to have made me his inheritor; and now it hath pleased God to call him to his mercy, without accomplishing any thing of mine advancement; and now he hath left me among you where I have been brought up, and left now as a poor knight, bastard son to the Count of Foix, without I have your aid and help; wherefore, Sirs, I require you, in God's behalf, to have pity on me, wherein ye shall do great alms. And I shall open the castle and suffer you to enter. I will not keep it against you."

Then they answered, and said, "Sir Juan, ye have spoken so nobly that it ought to suffice; and Sir, we say, that we will abide with you, and our intent is to keep this castle and goods with you; and if the Viscount of Chateaubon, your cousin, who is next inheritor to this county of Bierne, as next parent to your father, come hither to challenge his heritage and moveables, ere he have it, he shall know well how we shall defend you and your right from him and from your brother Sir Gratian. But, we suppose, that when the French king was last at Thoulouse, and my lord your father with him, that some order was taken as touching your father's inheritance; and this can Sir Roger of Spain your cousin tell; no man better than he. We shall write to him, and shew him of the death of the count your father, and desire him to come hither to help and counsel us in all things concerning the lands of Bierne and Foix; and also for the moveables, and for the interment of my lord your father; and this we promise you faithfully to uphold."

With this assurance Sir Juan was well content, and then opened the gate of the castle of Orthes, and such entered as would: and the same day the count's body was brought thither. At the meeting of the corpse, men and women wept piteously, in remembrance of his nobleness and puissant estate, his wit, and prudence, his prowess and largess, and the great prosperity that he lived in. There was neither French nor English that durst displease him. Most part of the people said, "Now our neighbours will make us war; whereas we were wont to live in peace and freedom, now shall we be in bondage, in misery, and subjection; now there is none to aid us."

"Ah Gaston! Gaston! fair son, why did ye ever so displease your father, that it cost you your life? If ye had been left with us, it should now have been to us a great comfort, but we lost you too young, and your father hath tarried too short a season with us; he was but threescore and three years of age; he might have lived, for any age, many a year longer; it was no great age for such a prince, having every thing at his ease and wish. Ah, thou land of Bierne, destitute and without comfort of any noble heritor, what shall become of thee? Thou shalt never again have such another as was this gentle Count of Foix!"

With such lamentations and weepings the body of this noble count was brought through the town of Orthes by eight noble knights; and behind was Sir Juan his bastard son; the Lord of Corasse, the Lord of Barantyne, the Lord of Baruge, the Lord of Quere*, and more than threescore other knights of Bierne, who were soon come to the hospital of Ryon when

* Probably of Barèges, and of Quercy.—Ed.

they knew of the count's death. Thus he was carried with open visage to the Freres in Orthes, and there he was embalmed and laid in lead; and so left under good keeping until the day of interment. And night and day, without ceasing, there were burning about his body four-and-twenty torches, borne by eight-and-forty yeomen: four-and-twenty in the night, and four-and-twenty in the day.

The death of this noble Count of Foix was anon known in other countries, and more were rather sorry of his death than glad; for he had in his days given such gifts so liberally that it could not be eschewed, wherefore he was beloved of every man that knew him. Pope Clement, when he knew of his death, was right sorrowful for him, because he had taken great pains in furthering of the marriage of his cousin Jane of Boulogne, who was Duchess of Berry. The same season, there was at Avignon, the Bishop of Paniers, who durst not come at his benefice for a displeasure that the Count of Foix had to him; and yet he was of his lineage. The cause was, the bishop would have exalted his jurisdiction and abated the count's; for all that the count had made him bishop. Then the pope sent for the bishop to come to his palace, and when he was come, the pope said, "Sir, Bishop of Paniers, your peace is made; the Count of Foix is dead." Of those tidings the bishop was glad, and, within a short season after, he departed from Avignon, and went to his bishoprick in the county of Foix. Tidings of the death of this count were anon come into France, to the king and to his council. The French king, and his brother, and the Duke of Bourbon, were sorry of his death, because of his nobleness.

Then the council said to the king, "Sir, the country

of Foix is yours by right of succession, seeing the Count of Foix is dead without heir of his body lawfully begotten; no man can debate with you therein; also they of the country think the same. And, Sir, there is one thing that helpeth greatly your title; ye have lent thereon fifty thousand francs. Sir, send and take possession of your gage, and keep it as your own inheritance, for they of the same country desire to be under your hand; it is a fair country, and shall come to you to good purpose, for it bordereth near to the realm of Arragon, and also to Catalonia; and peradventure hereafter ye may hap to make war with the king of Arragon, then the county of Foix shall be a good frontier, for therein be many fair and strong castles wherein to keep men of war, and to make good garrisons."

The king heard well these words, and anon inclined to their counsel, and said, "Sirs, let's see; whom shall we send on this message?"

Then it was determined to send the Lord de la Rivière, because he was known in that country, and with him the Bishop of Noyon. These two lords prepared themselves to go on this legation; and when they departed they rode at leisure by small journeys, and took their way by Avignon.

In the mean season, word was sent to the Viscount of Chasteaubon, being in the realm of Arragon, of the death of his cousin the Count of Foix. Then he rode till he came into Bierne, straight to Orthes; they of the town made him good cheer. Howbeit, they took him not as then for their lord, and said how all the country was not assembled, and that first they must assemble together the prelates, lords, and men of the good towns, and to counsel together what they should do; saying, that is a good country that holdeth of

itself and the lords that dwelleth therein, and hath heritages to be free. Then it was advised for the best, first to make the interment of the Count Gaston of Foix at Orthes, and to send for all the nobles of Bierne and of Foix, such as would come; and then to take counsel who they should accept for their lord. Then all the barons and prelates, and heads of good towns of Bierne and of Foix were sent for; they of Bierne came thither, but they of Foix refused to come, and said they would keep their country; for they heard say the French king would send thither to challenge the country of Foix. Howbeit, the Bishop of Pamiers was desired to come to Orthes because of lineage; and so he came thither in great array as to him appertained.

The day of the obsequies of the gentle Count Gaston of Foix, last count of that name, done in the Freres, in the town of Orthes, the year of our Lord God a thousand three hundred fourscore and eleven, on a Monday,—there was much people of the country of Bierne and of other places, both lords and knights, and other prelates. There were three bishops: the Bishop of Pamiers, who said the mass, and the Bishops of Ayre and Oleron, who were of Bierne. There was a goodly hearse and well ordered; and during the mass-time, there was holden before the altar by four knights, four banners with the arms of Foix and of Bierne: the first held Sir Raymon of Newcastle—the second Sir Espagne de Leon—the third Sir Peter de Quer—the fourth Sir Menault of Noailles. Sir Roger of Spain offered the sword, between the Bourge of Compeigne, and Pierre of Arnault of Bierne, captain of Lourde. The shield bare the Viscount of Bruniquel between Sir John of Chateauneuf and John of Chanteron. The helmet offered the Lord of Valen-

tine of Bierne, between Ernalton of Rostem and Ernalton of St. Columb. The horse was offered by the Lord of Corasse, between Ernalton of Spain and Raymonet of Compeigne. This entertainment was honourably done according to the usage of the country. And there were the two bastard sons of the Count of Foix, Sir Juan and Sir Gratian, and the Viscount of Chateaubon, and all the barons of Bierne, and some of Foix; but, as soon as the service was done, they of Foix departed, and rode the same day to dinner to Heritell, two miles from Orthes; and the next day, betimes, the Bishop of Pamiers departed; he would not be at the general Parliament which was the same day among them of Bierne.

Thus, the Count was buried in the Freres, at Orthes, before the high altar. So there is no more mention of him.—God have mercy upon his soul!

[NOTE.—As it would be tedious to give at length the whole of the negotiations and intrigues concerning the inheritance of Gaston de Foix, which lasted a considerable time, it may be as well here briefly to mention their result; *viz.*, that, in the end, the Viscount of Chateaubon inherited both Bierne and Foix, to hold them in the same manner as the old count had held them, in consideration of paying certain large sums of money to the count's two bastard sons, Sir Juan and Sir Gratian, as also to the French king. By this arrangement, all parties were content. Such readers as may wish for some short notice of the previous deeds of old Gaston de Foix, by which he had reached such a pitch of reputation (good or bad,) when Froissart went to his court, will find a brief summary of them in Note [15.]—ED.

NOTES

TO

GASTON DE FOIX.

NOTES

TO

GASTON DE FOIX.

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[1] *I, John Froissart, who have taken upon me to chronicle this history, &c.*, p. 68.

For a more detailed personal account of Froissart, see the notice prefixed to this volume; and for observations on his historical style and authority, the prefatory essay. The title " Sir," which he gives himself in many other passages, and by which he describes others as addressing him, was the appellation of respect used in addressing a clergyman; and did not mean to convey that the person so called was of knightly degree. See the notes of the Commentators on Shakspeare on this subject, with reference to Sir Oliver Martext, in As You Like It. With respect to Froissart, whose mother tongue was French, the term " Sir John," is that used by the translator for " *Messire Jean*," an appellation for which we have no expression perfectly synonimous. The want of a more exactly corresponding term in our language, has, in all

probability, given rise to this among numberless other apparent anomalies in our earlier writers. *Vide Pref. Essay.*

[2] *The most high and mighty Prince Gaston, Count of Foix and of Bierne*, p. 68.

Gaston Phœbus, (which cognomen was added from his beauty and general accomplishments of person,) the last Sovereign Count of Foix, was universally accounted and esteemed one of the most distinguished princes of his time. He flourished during the age *par excellence* of chivalry; and may, with great fairness, be cited as a specimen of the very most favourable kind of the period. He was gifted with great acuteness of mind; he had improved it in every way by cultivation and by active use. His courage and conduct in the field were equal to his talents as a statesman, and to his personal accomplishments as a prince. He is spoken of, wherever he is mentioned in history, in terms of almost unqualified praise and admiration, as the very pattern and flower of chivalry. Above all, Froissart, whose only object in going to his court at this time, seems to have been for the advantage of the society of the most polished and celebrated court of the age, always speaks of him (as the reader will afterwards perceive) as the very mirror of knighthood; the admitted pink and pattern of the noblest, most cultivated, and bravest men of this age of nobleness, courage, and chivalrous devotion. He was one of the last strictly sovereign counts of the middle ages in France; his earldom of Bierne was, as he often reminds us, held of no man but of God. I have already mentioned that the second and third books

of Froissart (from which the anecdotes and descriptions of the Count de Foix's court are taken,) are much more familiar in general style and manner, and written more in the nature of supplementary memoirs than of actual history. The whole of the third book, in point of fact, is only a mass of desultory (though, for the most part, very interesting) historical matter relating to the previous wars, which were collected by Froissart from the various knights who flocked to the Count de Foix's court, especially at Christmas-tide. This, he begins by saying, was the chief purport of his journey thither; and the information he collected, evidently for the most part taken down as soon as possible after his having received it, was slightly, if at all, thrown afterwards into a more orderly and consecutive series; or, indeed, digested into any more regular shape than that of having been told to the writer during his winter's residence at the count's court.

Froissart, evidently, is favourably inclined towards his host; and seems, indeed, *bonâ fide*, to have considered him as the *ne plus ultrà* of what a knight, a gentleman, and a prince, could or ought to be. He is generally so represented by all the contemporary writers. What a picture do times present in which *such* a man could be spoken, of I will not say with admiration, but without one unmingled sentiment of execration and scorn! His wisdom, at its best, was diplomatic self-seeking and deceit; in its ordinary manifestations, it was no more than a craftiness and cunning, which would be paltry to the last degree, were it not that their tragical effects give them, from their very blackness, an importance which, in themselves, they would not possess. When we read of the exemplifications of skilful flattery, and crafty knowledge of character, we

are inclined to smile; but when we see these things applied to the foulest and bloodiest treachery,—when we see honour shewn, and friendly courtesy rendered to guests who, scarcely risen from the board of their "chivalrous host," are stabbed to death by him with his own hand,—then do the fair and friendly fawnings of this *murderer under trust* acquire a character of interest and importance from the very intensity of wickedness to which they are applied.

The hand of Gaston de Foix was stained purple deep with blood thus shed; it was stained also with that of his own son. And this violator of every thing which most men, even the most savage, are wont to hold sacred,—this violator of the trusts of hospitality, of the ties of kindred, nay, of fatherly love itself; this man, reeking with every species of violent and treacherous murder, tiger-like in cruelty, tiger-like in craft,—this man is held up to us as a pattern in a pattern age, as one of the fairest and brightest flowers of knighthood, a sample of the nobleness, loyalty, and good faith of the good old times!

The reader, when he has gone a little farther in the text, will come to the narrations of the precise circumstance to which I now more particularly allude. He will there also probably perceive the reason which caused this stabber to find favour in the sight of Froissart, and of those who still continued, though in a minor degree, to give or to withhold praise and reputation almost at their pleasure, the minstrels, namely, and poets of the time. Gaston de Foix was lavish of his gold;—that is the whole secret. In that consisted his whole virtue, though it was by no means unchequered even in this. He was greedy, grasping, and deceitful; but, to writers of songs, and inditers of chronicles; to ambassadors, whose masters he

wished to court, or to supplant; any where, in short, where his outlay was sure to be repaid in valuable consideration of some kind or other,—in all such cases, and to all such persons, this flower of chivalry was liberal of his broad pieces. He was open handed; and those who profited thereby were little curious as to how deeply that hand might be stained with blood; or how the gold which fell from it, had been gathered thither.

With reference to Froissart, I have discussed this point at large in the prefixed notice to which I have already referred; but that I do not, in any degree, exaggerate in the generalization of the remark, I think the tone in which Froissart passes from the liberal and noble house-keeping of the count, to the story of the tragical death of his son, is more than sufficient warrant. One chapter is thus headed: "Of the great virtuousness and largess that was in the Count de Foix, and of the piteous end of Gaston his son*." It would scarcely be presupposed that this piteous end was by the father's own hand! In this instance, I admit, there were, primarily, circumstances of suspicion as to the young man's intentions towards himself, and (touching as the catastrophe of the story is) it is possible that the blow might have been struck under the momentary influence of violent passion; miserable circumstances of palliation, certainly, in the murder of a

* The reader, however, must observe that some of these headings are altered by me to suit the subjects more particularly under discussion. This one, however, is taken exactly from the text. I am aware that it is supposed that these subdivisions are not Froissart's own; but they are generally in strict consonance with the subject-matter, and in this case the heading is culled almost from his own words.—Ed.

son by a father, and yet the only palliation, even if it can be so considered, which can be urged! But, with respect to the assassination of Sir Peter Ernaut, which the reader will find in a very few pages farther, every circumstance of time, place, manner, person, cause—are so many additional aggravations of an act which, one would think, could scarcely admit of any. But I shall reserve the more immediate remarks suggested by this part of the subject till we come to the passage itself. My principal object in pointing out the particular circumstances of darkness in deeds so atrocious, is, if possible, to shew to the admirers (from want of acquaintance with the real facts, I am sure) of these ages, *what* it is which they are holding up to praise under the title of "chivalrous spirit," of the good old days of Love and Gentleness! I have already said something as to their claim to the former praise. That of "gentleness" will find a very curious and particular exemplification in the dying words of Sir Peter Ernaut. As for the term "chivalrous spirit," I conclude it means the spirit prevalent in the days of chivalry; which was one of general outrage, violence, treachery, spoliation, and murder; as, I think, every one who really studies the history of the period will ultimately admit.

[3] *And so, we were six days in our journey ere we came to Orthes*, p. 70.

Froissart's routes are always given with an accuracy, peculiarly graphic and picturesque. One might almost make a map from his journeys, and a landscape of every striking point in their course. I have prefixed to this volume a small map of the counties of Foix and Bierne;

to give the reader a more immediate idea of the various localities alluded to repeatedly in this story. He will, also, be able to trace in it the passage of the Black Prince into and out of Spain, which story he has read in the former volume. I need scarcely mention, that it is also the *locale* of more recent and more strictly British glories. It comprises the whole ground of the campaign of 1813-4, and embraces many of the striking and beautiful landscapes of Captain Batty. Mountain scenery remains (from obvious reasons) unchanged longer than any other description of inanimate nature. The character of a cultivated country must always partake, more or less, of the degree of civilization of the nation which inhabits it; but mountainous regions remain for ages with scarcely any change very striking to the passing eye. Thus many of the views among the Pyrenees might, with very little stretch of fancy, be supposed to be the scene of the passage of the Army of Aequitaine,—of the Black Edward, and Don Pedro,—instead of that of modern England and Spain,—of Wellington and Ferdinand VII.

But this *locale* has also another charm, at least, I hope I have few readers to whom it *is not* one, to reflect that it is the country of Henri Quatre; of him who possessed all the intrepidity and frank courage of a soldier of fortune, together with the kind and mild-heartedness, so peculiarly the Christian attribute, yet so sadly lacked by *most* Christians:—a goodness of heart, almost incompatible with the trade of war, yet (as this illustrious example proves) by no means incompatible with all the higher and noble class of the soldier's duties: add to this, also, a solid and enlightened wisdom of civil government, in advance, far in advance, of his age, and little to be looked for in one

who had passed his youth in strife and intestine struggles,—and we have the most perfect picture of a good man and a great prince, that, perhaps, ever was presented to the world. It was, indeed, the peculiar characteristic of Henri Quatre, to unite goodness and greatness to a degree so seldom seen, as almost to have justified the false and pernicious belief of their incompatibility.

He was born at Pau. He was Prince of Béarn (Bierne), but only titular King of Navarre. His great-grandfather had been half-robbed, half-cheated of his kingdom, by Ferdinand the Catholic.—Pampeluna was the capital of the old kingdom of Navarre. It was through his celebrated mother, Jeanne d'Albret, that he inherited these two titles;—Antoine de Bourbon, his weak and vacillating father, was of the house of France. It was his maternal grandfather, old Henri d'Albret, who exclaimed, when his daughter placed in his arms the new-born prince—*Ma brebis vient d'enfanter un lion!*

I cannot do better (that I may break away at once from the fascinations which always surround the name of Henri Quatre,) than translate the very interesting and spirited picture of the entrance into his country from the Basque side, from the Hermite en Province of M. Jouy: a work which, light as its title announces it to be, abounds (together with its predecessors*) with passages of original and philosophic observation, and of eloquence of feeling, which we should not, *à priori*, expect to meet with in a work thrown into so unpretending a form. Its peculiar beauty and felicity of diction have been too long

* *L'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin, Le Franc Parleur: L'Hermite de la Guiane.*

known as M. Jouy's particular excellencies, for me to hope that I have done them any thing like justice in the following version. L'Hermite has quitted Bayonne, and is proceeding towards Pau. Froissart's approach being from Carcassonne-ward, as he would himself have phrased it, the reader will thus be presented with an accurate idea of the scenery of the district embraced in the map at the beginning of the volume. Bigore, of which Tarbe is the capital, lies between Foix and Bierne, which now form the departments of the Upper Pyrenees, and of the Lot and Garonne. L'Hermite, on the contrary, enters the district from the side of Bayonne :—" After passing," he says, " the first post (from Bayonne) I still had the Adour before my eyes. This river, which is not very broad, alone separated me from the Labour *, and, nevertheless, everything was already changed in aspect and appearance. I should have thought myself an hundred leagues from it, if it had not been for the Adour and the Pyrenees, which were still beside me. Neither the women, nor the men, nor the brooks, nor the horses, nor the oxen, nor the houses, nor the fields, nor the carts, nor the ploughs—*Nothing*, in short, was in the least like that which I was leaving behind me. We are not, perhaps, sufficiently astonished with these changes, so sudden, and in such near neighbourhood. To be surprised at nothing appears fine ; but to remark many things is more useful †. . . . . . At Puyoo the landscape begins to assume the features and the

* The country around Bayonne.—Ed.

† This is, I am conscious, but a feeble rendering of the delicate irony of the expression, "Ne s'étonner de rien parait beau ; mais remarquer beaucoup de choses est plus utile."—Ed.

characteristics which belong peculiarly to Béarn *. All that we meet before rather resembles the *Landes* in the neighbourhood of Mont-de-Marsan, of Roquefort, and of Barzas. Hence, the frame of the picture—that is to say, the mountains on one side, and the hills on the other—limit and trace out better the plains and *gaves* † which extend and wind between them."

The following spirited parallel between the Basques and the Béarnais is added with reference to the exactitude and regularity of the agricultural aspect of the country of the latter. One might almost think it was a picture of the points of likeness and difference between our neighbours of the Emerald Isle, and our own worthy countrymen. Perhaps a dash of our northern neighbours' characteristics is mingled in the latter:—"The Basque measures everything with a glance; the Béarnais by rule and line. The Basque has rather a large habitation, in which he desires that he and his (among which he includes animals) should be at their ease. The Béarnais condenses everything into a small dwelling, in which, by dint of order, he finds space for all. The Basque has a sort of careless confidence in himself, in nature, and in Him of whom nature is only the working-hand. The Béarnais foresees, oversees, and watches, without ceasing. Next-year is to him as To-morrow. In the eye of the Basque we can see that the spirit dreams; in that of the Béarnais, that it

* Lord Berners, whose translation of Froissart I have followed, uniformly spells this—Bierne: I have not thought it worth while, in treating of so remote a period, to vary the orthography.—Ed.

† *Gaves*, is the local generic name for streams; as the Gave d'Oleron, the Gave de Pau, &c.

calculates. It is difficult to be more witty, or more brave, than the Béarnais; but, in a great measure, he is so from the point of honour. He is so, because he will not be out-said or out-done by any one. All that the Basque can be, he would be in a desert, as upon the stage of the world. As for his courage, he is no more proud of it than he is of his beard. . . . . In the mechanical arts, the Basques do very quickly and well. The Béarnais slowly and better."—*L'Hermite en Province*, tom. i. pp. 180, 186.

I am aware this picture of the Basques and Béarnais, in the 19th century, is but little germane to the matter immediately in hand; for Froissart never, by any chance, makes any mention of *The People* of any country. He might, however, have made an exception in this case; for these very remarkable people, who dwell on both sides of the Pyrenees, rather, I might say, among them, are among the least changed, the least emigrating, and the most unconquered race which now, or then, could be found in Europe. Even the Romans, completely as they had subjugated Spain, and extensive as their possessions were in Gaul, were scarcely ever thoroughly able to subdue this handful of Biscayan mountaineers *. Hence the sudden and striking change in passing from the Labour into Béarn.

* See Hallam, Sismondi, *&c. &c.* The kings of Spain are, even now, only *lords* of Biscay; and I verily believe, the Biscayans would rather submit to the severest oppression of their lord, than to the mildest government of a king. Such is the power of a word! The well known exclamation of the Biscayan, when asked (during the Buonapartean contests,) whom he *would* submit to as king, is strongly illustrative of this:—No el Dios mismò! was his sonorous and emphatic answer.—Ed.

[4] *And so they warred upon each other*, p. 71.

The feuds between the houses of Foix and Armagnac, which are referred to continually in the course of the present story, appear to have been as constant, fierce, and almost of as long duration, as those upon our own northern borders during the same ages. The enmity appears to have been even greater; for we find in a subsequent chapter, that the Count of Foix would not listen to the proposal of an alliance between his kinswoman Jane of Bulloigne, and the son of the Duke of Berry, whose mother was of the blood of Armagnac; but he had no sort of objection to the marriage taking place with the old duke himself, although the bride was scarcely in her teens, while the bridegroom approached his grand climacteric*. The original cause of this extreme and unextinguishable hatred between the two races, is thus characteristically given by Froissart:—

"Anciently, about an hundred years past, there was a lord in Bierne called Gaston, a right valiant man in arms, and is buried in the Freres, right solemnly at Orthes, and there ye may see what person he was of stature and of body; for, in his life-time, his picture was made in Lateen, which is there yet. This Gaston, lord of Bierne, had two daughters, the eldest was married to the Count of Armagnac that then was; the younger to the Count of Foix, who, as then, was nephew to the king of Arragon.

"And so it fortuned that this lord of Bierne had a

* For a more particular notice of the royal family of France, at this period, (1388) as well as for a short historical outline of its state, see the following Note [5].

great war with the king of Spain that then was, who came through all Bisquay with a great number of men of war to enter Bierne. This lord then wrote letters to his two sons-in-law, the Counts of Armagnac and of Foix, that they should come to serve and aid him to defend his heritage. These letters seen, the Count of Foix, as soon as he might, assembled his people, and prayed all his friends so much, that he had a five hundred knights and squires armed, and two thousand varlets with spears and darts, and all a foot. And so he came to the county of Bierne to serve his father, who had of him great joy. And the king of Spain, who had with him twenty thousand men was lodged near at hand; and the Lord Gaston of Bierne and the Count of Foix tarried for the Count of Armagnac, and thought ever that he would come, and so tarried for him three days. And on the fourth day, the Count of Armagnac sent his letter by a herald to the Lord Gaston of Bierne, and sent him word how he might not come; and how he had nothing to do to bear arms for the county of Bierne. When the Lord Gaston heard those tidings of excusations, and saw how he should have no aid or comfort of the Count of Armagnac, he was sore abashed, and demanded counsel of the Count of Foix and of the other barons of Bierne, how they should maintain themselves." "Sir," quoth the count, "since we be here assembled, let us go and fight with our enemies." This counsel was taken; and there was a great battle and a fierce, and more than ten thousand Spaniards were slain. And the Count of Foix, who led the first battle, [the van] took prisoners the king of Spain's son and his brother, and sent them to his father-in-law, who was in the rear-guard. And the Spaniards were so discomfitted, that the Count of

Foix chased them to the gates of St. Andrew, in Bisquay. And the king of Spain took the abbey, and put on the vesture of a monk, or else he had been taken. Then the Count of Foix returned to the Lord Gaston of Bierne, who made him good cheer, as it was reason; for he had saved his honour, and kept his county of Bierne, the which else was likely to have been lost had the Lord of Bierne had peace with the Spaniards at his own will. And when the Lord Gaston of Bierne was returned to Orthes, there, before all the barons of Foix and Bierne that were there present, he said to his son of Foix, 'Fair son, ye are my true and faithful son, ye have saved my honour and my country. The Count of Armagnac, who hath married my eldest daughter, hath excused himself from this business, and would not come to defend mine heritage, wherein he should have part; wherefore I say, that such part as he should have had by reason of my daughter, he hath forfeit and lost it; and here clearly I inherit you, my son of Foix, after my decease, of all the whole land to you and your heirs for ever; and I desire, will, and command, all my subjects to seal, accord, and agree to the same;' and all answered how they were well content to do so."—*Froissart*, lib. iii. c. 25. This was above an hundred years before the time at which Froissart writes; and the two counts of Foix and of Armagnac, for the time being, had been, *comme de raison*, cutting each other's throats ever since. Revenge was a bequest never unattended to by the legatee.

[5] *The Duke D'Anjou*, p. 75.

As the royal family of France are frequently mentioned in the course of this story, it may be as well here to give

a slight outline of its principal members after the death of Charles V. (See the Notice of the English Power in Acquitaine; as also the notes to "the Battle of Poitiers, and the Black Prince in Spain." Vol. I.)

Charles V., to whom, there being already a Charles the Great (Charlemagne) in their history, his grateful countrymen gave the title of the Wise, died in 1380. His son, the unhappy Charles VI., was at that time of tender years, and his uncles, from their position, naturally assumed the government of the State. Louis d'Anjou, the prince named in the text, who had hitherto been governor of Languedoc (the provinces south of the Loire), and had considerably distinguished himself by his successes against the English, was about the period of his brother's death adopted by Joan of Naples, and set off for Italy, carrying with him the treasures which his provident brother had amassed in the castle of Melun, which the said Louis seems to have appropriated, with very little regard to those maxims of honesty, which the honour of the chivalrous ages does not seem to have included in its code. The Duke of Berri, who had contrived to find it inconvenient to return into England, on the breaking out of hostilities, whence he had come "on leave of absence," as an hostage at the period of the treaty of Bretigny, succeeded to his brother's government, that is, to the right of sending his lieutenants to pillage and harry the people, he himself remaining about the person of the young king, to share in the general government of the realm with his brother the Duke of Burgundy. This last dukedom, however, was not merely titular. The duchy of Burgundy, i. e. that rich and extensive country, as a nominal fief, but in point of power, almost in point of name,

in real sovereignty, had been given by John of France to his favourite son Philip (called the Bold), as an *apanage*, or "younger brother's fortune,"—the which had but lately become an integral part of the French kingdom, by an intermarriage with the old Burgundian family. This Philip was the first of the sovereign dukes of Burgundy of the House of France, and by his marriage with the sole heiress of Philip, the last Earl of Flanders, he became possessed of that vast and dangerous power, which, in the person of his son, betrayed France to a foreign enemy;* and, at a subsequent period, rendered it almost the hazard of a die, whether France or Burgundy was to be the preponderating power in Gaul. As in nearly all the stories comprehended in the third volume, frequent mention is made of the "Duke of Burgundy" for the time being, and, as besides, the subject is one more generally familiar, than in fact known accurately by general historical readers, I will subjoin a brief notice of the dates of the accession of the four Dukes of Burgundy of the House of France.

Philip (the Bold) who is frequently spoken of in the course of the present story, received his investiture in 1363. He married the daughter and sole heiress of the last Earl of Flanders, and after considerable wars and rebellions (which are very animatedly recorded by Froissart), succeeded in establishing his right to this sovereignty as the inheritance of his wife. Thus were these two powers united, the effect of which (as regarded Flanders) existed up to the period when the general clearance made by the French revolution, made such havoc among that system

* Henry V. of England.

of feudal Europe, which Voltaire designates as having caused her modern history to be " one great genealogical table." To this inheritance, not long after, was added that of Brabant, and subsequently of the major part of the Low Countries. He was succeeded by his son John, surnamed Sans Peur, in the year 1404, who was the celebrated rival and assassin of the Duke of Orleans, brother to Charles VI. (See note 12). He was himself assassinated at Montereau, in June, A. D. 1419. To him succeeded Philip, surnamed the Good, who, comparatively, indeed, seems to have deserved the title; for it is difficult to conceive a more savage and violent race than his progenitors and his successor. Indeed, the scriptural denunciation against such men seems to have been instanced in most individuals of his line*. The reign of Philip the Good would, perhaps, have been comparatively peaceful, in despite of the fierce wars around him, had it not been for the ungoverned turbulence of his son, the Comte de Charolais, who afterwards became well known by the title of Charles the Bold; or, as some more justly call him, the Rash (Le Téméraire.) At one time, it seemed, as I have already noticed, almost an even chance whether he or Louis XI. should ultimately prevail. It was evidently impossible that the power of both could remain undiminished. But the reverses of Charles were as rapid as his successes had been. After his armies had been shattered by the Swiss at Granson and Morat, he fell in a sort of forlorn-hope fight at Nanci; and Burgundy was re-united to France for ever. He left one daughter, who inherited the Low Countries; and, marrying

* " Mischief will hunt the violent man."

Maximillian of Austria, afterwards emperor, became the progenitrix of all the House of Austria of modern history, and transmitted her Flemish patrimony to them. Burgundy itself, in which she was said to have some rights, was, after a very short struggle, made integral with France, by her father's wily rival, Louis XI.

The Duke of Berri, the other brother of Charles V., married, as has been said already, a kinswoman of Gaston Count de Foix, when far advanced in years. The state of France in 1388-9, may be gathered from the following lively and entertaining passage, which I have translated from the *Essais Historiques sur Paris*, of M. de St. Foix, of which I have made considerable mention already. My English readers must compound for his nationality of feeling and of writing. I have said a word or two touching both in the "Digression upon Edward III.'s claim to the crown of France," in the notice of the English power in Acquitaine in the preceding volume.

I prefer availing myself of this extract to making a similar summary, myself, from history—both from the intrinsic liveliness and spirit of its tone,—and from its being by one thoroughly conversant with the history of the times. There are few books of anecdotical history more agreeable than these historical essays upon Paris. Why does not some equally well-read Londoner favour us with a similar history of the localities of our own metropolis? I fear there are few, in this country, except *mere* antiquaries (of the school of the last age) who have a sufficient knowledge of the history of London; and those few, probably, are too much of the last age to do the subject justice in these times. It may be proper to add that the following passage is extracted from a sort of

supplementary memoir upon the English Wars in France; of which I have spoken more largely in the "Notice of the English Power in Acquitaine." Vol. I.:—"Charles V. died on the 15th of September, 1380; at his death there remained to the English, in his kingdom, only Calais, Cherbourg, Brest, Bordeaux, and Bayonne. The youth of Charles VI., who was only in his twelfth year when he came to the crown, was the cause of France being delivered up to the avarice and ambition of his three uncles, the Dukes of Berri, of Burgundy, and of Anjou. Called by their birth to the government of the state, they became tyrants, and thought only of their individual interests. The Duke of Anjou, whom Joan, Queen of Naples, had adopted, set off for Italy, after having made himself master of the treasure which the late king had amassed and hidden in the castle of Melun*. The Duke of Berry went to pillage Languedoc and Guienne, of which he had caused the government to be given to him; and the Duke of Burgundy who remained master in the council, caused a war to be undertaken against the Flemings, who had revolted against the Count of Flanders, whose daughter, and only heir, he had married. The king was not yet fourteen; but his warlike disposition had been manifested since his childhood, and he insisted upon marching with this expedition. It was at the beginning of November—the Lys was overflowed—five or six hundred of our troops having found some boats, passed this river without being perceived, and attacked briskly and routed a corps of six thousand of the Flemings, who kept the *tête-de-pont* of Comines. There was found among their dead, a

* In this M. de St. Foix is borne out by all historians.—Ed.

woman, who had promised they should be invincible if they would allow her to carry the standard of St. George. We advanced into the country, and the 17th of November, 1383, is memorable in our history by the gain of the battle of Rosebeque. The insurgents, proud of their number, and filled with the most insolent confidence, had determined the evening before in their council, 'to give quarter to no one, except the little King Charles, of whom Philip d'Arteveld, their chief, wished to make a present to the King of England.' They were entirely defeated; there being more than two thousand of them killed;—d'Arteveld was amongst the number. This victory struck fear into the rebel towns; they all submitted, except Ghent. The season was too far advanced to besiege it, and the king returned to Paris.

"The following year, the war became still more animated in Flanders. Religion was intermixed with it. There were two Popes, Clement VII. and Urban VI.; they had been respectively anathematizing each other for five years*. Urban, seeing that his spiritual thunders did not much advance his affairs, had recourse to temporal arms; and published against his competitor and his adherents a crusade, to which he attached all imaginable indulgences. The English hastened to gain them; nothing seemed to them so meritorious as to march to a war which principally menaced France, where Clement was acknowledged as the real successor of St. Peter. The crusaders disembarked at Calais; they were commanded by Henry Spencer, Bishop of Norwich. This mitred

* Some slight notice of the great Schism of the West will be found in the eleventh note to the present story.—Ed.

gend'arme, says an historian, "either that he found our frontier too well guarded, or that the men of Ghent had engaged him in their interests, marched against the Earl of Flanders, who had acknowledged Urban, but who was the vassal of France, where they held for Clement. He took Gravelines, Dunkirk, and many other towns on the Flemish coast; but, at the approach of the Constable de Clisson, and of our army, the credit of the benedictions of Urban fell. Spencer raised the siege of Ypres, and abandoned all his conquests, except Bruges, Gravelines, and Bourbourg. His troops, which he had distributed in these places, fled from the three first as soon as we approached them. Siege was laid to Bourbourg, whither they had all retired; and not one Englishman would have escaped, if the Duke of Brittany, who was with our army, had not interceded for his old friends. They were permitted to retire to Calais. The Earl of Flanders died on the 21st of January 1384. The Duke of Burgundy, who had married his daughter and sole heiress, by uniting this rich inheritance to the other great fiefs of France, which the king, John, his father, had given him, formed that excessive power which was afterwards so fatal to the state. The unhappy policy of that prince, and of the Duke of Brittany, always was, that to oblige France to treat them with consideration, and to wink at their airs of independence, it was necessary that she should fear them; and that she would cease to fear them if the English were entirely driven from the kingdom. The reader will henceforth see nothing but one series of crimes and treachery. The greatest preparations had been made at Sluys. Nearly nine hundred vessels of transport had been assembled; Charles VI., by the advice of the Con-

stable de Clisson, and under the guidance of that great man, was about to make a descent upon England. The moment was favourable; all her best troops had been sent upon an expedition into Portugal; and every thing seemed to promise us an easy conquest. The English, whose natural presumption always abandons them whenever they are attacked in their home, were already deserting their maritime towns, and, far from thinking to defend their coasts, were flying with their riches into the recesses of their forests [!] Richard II., in the midst of this general consternation, followed the advice of the Duke of Suffolk; he tried the avarice of the Duke de Berri, and succeeded. This unworthy prince was charged to assemble a part of our army, and to lead it into Flanders. Charles VI. sent courier after courier, to hasten him, but in vain. He arrived only about the middle of September; the wind, which had been most favourable for two months, began to change, the sea became stormy, and the greater part of our vessels, shattered by a tempest of two days and two nights, were no longer fit for service. During the winter, new preparations were made. Clisson continually represented in the council, that there were many troubles and dissensions in England, and that we ought to profit by them. He went to Tréguier towards the end of June, and hastened the armament. Richard II., to avert this new storm, had recourse to the Duke of Brittany; he could not have applied to a better quarter. The duke, who believed that he had very recent causes of complaint against Clisson, thought that he could serve the English, and yet appear only to wish to revenge himself upon a man, who, born his subject, seemed to affect to brave him upon every occasion. He sent to

compliment him upon his arrival in Brittany, and invited him to attend the estates which he had convoked at Vannes. Clisson went, persuaded that his dignity of constable would shield him from every insult; moreover he was, they say, in love with the duchess. The duke overwhelmed him with caresses; consulted him in many affairs; and, having led him one day on a party of pleasure to the château of Hermine, there caused him to be arrested, and ordered Bavalon, captain of this castle, to sew him up in a sack as soon as it was dark, and throw him into the sea. Bavalon knew his master; he counted upon his remorse. In effect, the duke was, next day, of a very different mind to what he had been the night before; and when Bavalon acknowledged to him that his order was not yet executed, he embraced him with transport, and assured him he should never forget the service he had rendered him by disobeying him. However, as he pretended to have reasons to complain of Clisson, he declared that he would set him at liberty only upon certain conditions, and after his having paid him the sum of one hundred thousand livres for his ransom*. The king was as much irritated as he ought to be by this outrage upon this first officer of the crown; but his youth still kept him in dependance upon his uncles. They hated Clisson, and the Duke of Brittany was quit by promising to return the hundred thousand livres, and to give up the other conditions that he had exacted from his prisoner.

* This almost ludicrous instance of deceit and treachery is far too leniently represented by M. de St. Foix.—See the Notice of Froissart and his Times, prefixed to this story. These were the days of honour and good faith! I suppose *this* was one of the exemplifications of the honour of a true knight.—Ed.

It was thus that this second armament against England failed. Clisson had been the soul of the expedition, he had meditated and matured the project; and he was the only person who could have executed it. He possessed the confidence of the troops, who, as soon as the news of his detention was spread at Tréguier, deserted. The Dukes of Berry and of Burgundy continued to sacrifice the state to their individual interests. All France cried out against them. Charles VI. having reached his twentieth year, declared to them that thenceforward he would govern for himself. They retired very discontented; one into his government of Languedoc, and the other to his states of Flanders. The new ministers whom the king chose had talents and good intentions. They reformed many abuses; they suppressed a part of the taxes, burdensome to the people, contrary to the administration of justice and the finances, and exceedingly prejudicial to commerce. The country began to hope for a glorious and fortunate reign. It was known that Clisson, convinced of the necessity of completing the work of entirely driving out the English from the kingdom, was only waiting for the expiration of a truce for three years, which had been granted them, to go and attack them in their own island; to cause them to feel a portion of those evils they had inflicted upon us, and to oblige them to accept peace according to the conditions we might choose to impose upon them*. In the night between the 13th and 14th of June, 1392, returning to his hotel, but slightly attended, he was attacked in the street by Pierre de Craon, at the head of a score of scoundrels.

* See Notice of the English Power in Acquitaine, Vol. I.—Ed.

They thought they had killed him, seeing him fall from his horse; but he was only wounded, and recovered. It was known that Craon had taken refuge in Brittany; the duke, summoned to deliver him up, answered that he had passed into his states, but he was there no longer. Upon this answer the king resolved to march into Brittany. The Dukes of Berri and of Burgundy, to whom he sent orders to come to him with the troops they were bound to furnish, obeyed, declaring loudly that the war was very unjust.

"On the 5th of August the army left Mans, and took the route of Nantes. It is said that, for three or four days, some wildness had been observed in the eyes and in the deportment of the king. The weather was exceedingly hot; he was struck with a *coup-de-soleil*, which turned his brain, and made him mad instantly. He drew his sword, and killed three or four of those who were nearest him. I am willing to believe that this accident, which left him during the remainder of a very long life only slight intervals of reason, was not the effect of a deleterious draught; but why was not that huge black man, that species of phantom, who some minutes before had started out of a bush, and, having seized the bridle of the king's horse, had exclaimed to him, in a dreadful voice—'Stop! Whither goest thou, prince?—thou art betrayed!'—Why was not this man arrested?—And why, during above a fortnight previous, was the rumour prevalent at Paris, that the expedition against Brittany would be fatal?

"There was no more question of this war. The troops were disbanded. The king was brought back to Paris. The ministers, whom he had chosen, were dismissed from

the council, and basely persecuted by the Dukes of Berri and of Burgundy, who again took possession of the government. No more was thought of taking advantage of the troubles of England. A truce of eight-and-twenty years was concluded with Richard II. He obtained the pardon of Craon, and this assassin returned to court, while Clisson was banished from it, and beheld himself deprived of all his employments."—*Œuvres de St. Foix.* Vol. V. pp. 154-163.

It is no wonder that a French writer should deplore this catastrophe. Charles VI. had every promise and prospect of being as great a statesman as his father, and as brave and successful a warrior as his son.

[6] *Two allans of Spain*, p. 77.

Gaston de Foix was celebrated for his fondness for hunting, and for his breed of dogs. He died, as it will be seen, when hunting. And Froissart, who seems also to have had a taste for dogs, took four greyhounds to his court, being a courtier as well as a sportsman. See "Biographical Notice of Froissart." This particular breed of dogs seems to have originally come from Albania, and to have been very celebrated in these times. I should conceive the greyhounds, as they are usually termed, which appear to have been the chief dogs in use at that day, must have been more of the great stag-hound, than the slender animal, which we now call "greyhound." Something, it is probable, of the tall wire-haired breed, and probably with the nose of a lurcher,—as fleet almost as a greyhound, and with the fierceness of the stag-hound. There is a species of dog, something of this kind, only

of considerably smaller stature, and, I believe, without scent, on the Malabar coast;—called, from its country, the *Poligar dog:* See "Daniel's Oriental Sports." With regard to the Allans, the foot note to the original text marks *Cotgrave,* as the authority for their origin. The dogs were probably something of this kind; but I confess myself not to be sufficiently well-read in canine antiquities to be prepared to give further information on the subject. I do not believe any existing race of dogs is known under that name; though I speak, like Humphrey Clinker, "under correction."

[7] *Whatever it was, quoth the knight, thus it was,* p. 80.

I have already more than once alluded to this act of shocking and most treacherous cruelty. I shall not here trust myself with any more particular comment upon it, than the following quotation, from a work of high historical authority, though, I doubt whether, as far as deduction goes, that authority be always equally deserved with its extent, and with the reputation of extreme learning with regard to those times—an erudition, indeed, equally unquestioned and unquestionable. I allude to Mr. Hallam's work upon the Middle Ages. In summing up the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the feudal system, he has the following passage, which I quote here, from its singular opposition to the matter in hand, and yet proceeding, as it does, from a candid and most learned writer. The former attribute, the first paragraph of this passage may tend to illustrate. The Italics I have marked myself:—

"The peace and good order of society were not pro-

moted by this system (the feudal). Though private wars did not originate in the feudal customs, "it is impossible to doubt, that they were perpetuated by so convenient an institution, which indeed owed its universal establishment to no other cause. And as predominant habits of warfare are totally irreconcileable with those of industry, not merely by the immediate works of destruction, which render its efforts unavailing, but through that contempt of peaceful occupations which they produce, the feudal system must have been intrinsically adverse to the accumulation of wealth, and the improvement of those arts, which mitigate the evils, or abridge the labours of mankind.

" *But as the school of moral discipline, the feudal institutions were perhaps most to be valued.* Society had sunk, for several centuries, after the dissolution of the Roman empire, into a condition of utter depravity, where, if any vices could be selected as more eminently characteristic than others, they were *falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude. In slowly purging off the lees of this extreme corruption, the feudal spirit exerted its ameliorating influence. Violation of faith stood first in the catalogue of crimes, most repugnant to the very essence of a feudal tenure, most severely and promptly avenged, most branded by general infamy.* The feudal law-books breathe throughout a spirit of honourable obligations. The feudal course of jurisdiction promoted what trial by peers is peculiarly calculated to promote,—a keener feeling and readier perception of moral as well as leading distinctions. And as the judgment and sympathy of mankind are seldom mistaken in these great points of veracity and justice, except through the temporary success of crimes, or the count of definite

standard of right, they gradually recovered themselves when law precluded the one, and supplied the other. In the reciprocal services of lord and vassal, there was ample scope for every magnanimous and disinterested energy. The heart of man, when placed in circumstances which have a tendency to excite them, will seldom be deficient in such sentiments. *No occasions could be more favourable than the protection of a faithful supporter*, or the defence of a beneficent sovereign, against such powerful aggression, as left no prospect except of sharing in his ruin." *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages;* Chap. II., Part 2, vol. 1, pp. 321—323, 8vo. edit. 1822.

I am aware that the self-devotion of Sir Peter Ernaut is a striking and beautiful example of his fidelity to his word; but I am yet to learn what ignominy, or reprobation awaited this, and a multitude of other acts of equal *falsehood and treachery* of Gaston de Foix, and numberless others of the same period. The instance alluded to in a former note, and given at length in the Notice of the Spirit of Froissart's Times, which is very familiarly known and remarkable in history,* was assuredly one of most extraordinary duplicity and deceit; to say nothing of the murder in purpose, and the robbery in fact. Was the Duke of Britanny scouted?—No.—By no one, at least, except the promising young king; who was half-poisoned, as it would seem, in order to prevent his carrying into effect his justice against another outrageous act, arising out of this

* The kidnapping the Constable de Clisson, by the Duke of Britanny; by inveigling him into a castle, under pretence of asking his opinion, on a point of architectural taste!—See Note 5, and Notice of Froissart.

outrage. Was Gaston de Foix "branded by general infamy," for this murder under trust of his kinsman, or for the assassination of his son?—No!—"He was right perfect in all things," as Froissart says, a few pages farther on; and he was undoubtedly one of the most highly esteemed knights of the period. This same Charles VI. courted (in the person of his uncle) the alliance of his family; and was flattered by having prevailed upon this eminent baron and renowned knight to come and visit him at Thoulouse. It may be said that this individual instance may have been overlooked; and that it is not fair to argue upon the exception to the exclusion of the rule. Certainly it is not. But I argue against the exception being substituted for the rule, and *vice versâ*. The rule, i.e. the general practice, was cruelty and murder—*treacherous* cruelty and murder—the exceptions, the very rare exceptions, were justice, humanity, and good faith.

As for this being a private instance, it is recorded in a public and well-known history—in one more than commonly known even to readers of moderate historical information; and with which Mr. Hallam has evinced that intimate acquaintance which might be expected from his known learning and research. Nay, but a very few pages previous, he mentions this very Gaston de Foix, in a dissertation upon the right of the feudal barons to coin money: the county of Foix (or rather, perhaps, the viscounty of Béarn) being one of the very few perfect sovereignties existing at that period in France.

It were much, very much, to be wished, that Mr. Hallam had borne out by examples this high eulogium upon the feudal system. It is needless to tell us what the probable

effect of such and such laws should and ought to be, when the details, included even in his own volumes, belie the accuracy of this general summary. He is too faithful a witness to admit of his giving so loose a summing up, without detection. I cannot but regret this the more, as it gives the eminent name of Mr. Hallam in matters of this nature, in authority for what I am convinced he must upon reflection admit (to himself at least) to be a very *couleur-de-rose* manner of viewing the subject; with respect, that is, to actual fact, whatever the written laws may have been. The written laws, indeed, of a people, or of a period, may be highly honourable and just, while (especially in times of constant warfare like those) the practice of individuals may be very particularly the reverse.

It is not in a brief note to a work like this, that I would wish to be thought so presumptuous, as to controvert the opinions of a person of such historical authority as Mr. Hallam. But the text of these stories is authentic history; and to the facts there recorded, I refer the reader for a running commentary of what I advance; and as the proverb says, "facts are stubborn things." That I have had no particular choice in telling the worst traits of these times, may be readily seen by every one who will take the trouble to turn to the Third Book of Froissart. Such an endeavour would be neither just, nor would it be consistent with the possibility of making this work any thing beyond a Newgate calendar of the 14th Century. I have, in no case, exclaimed *particularly* against what took place in fair and open fight (though burning people alive in a *bastide*, appears to have been an ordinary mode of warfare); but I cannot record such acts as those upon which I am now commenting, without being permitted

to enter my protest against being supposed to coincide in the opinion of *these* being days of honour, generosity, and good faith.

[8] *For out of every country there was resort, for the valiantness of this Count*, p. 88.

This passage in Froissart is very generally quoted and alluded to by writers who treat upon the manners of the Middle Ages. It seems to be considered, and very justly, as an accurate, as well as characteristic, description of the way of living usual in the higher courts of the period. Dr. Percy, Mr. Warton, and also, as I have noticed, Mr. Hallam, all cite or allude to this picture, either incidentally or otherwise, in their respective works;—Dr. Percy, in the Essay on the Ancient Minstrels *, and Mr. Warton, in his History of English Poetry. The latter, indeed, quotes the whole passage in the learned and interesting account which he gives of Froissart, both as an historian and a poet. My immediate object in alluding to it here, is to extract the very valuable and excellent observations which Mr. Warton adds to it as a summary of his opinion concerning the moral tendency of the manners and institutions of that age. I the more readily avail myself of this authority, that I may place it in immediate opposition to the passage which I have cited above from Mr. Hallam. It is gratifying to have an authority so confessedly high, to cite in support of the comments which I have ventured to make upon the extracts from Mr. Hallam's work. If the latter writer be the more

* Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, Vol. I.

deeply learned of the two, as to the feudal institutions themselves,—it is certain that Mr. Warton's acquirements would lead him more immediately to the consideration of the *effects* of those institutions, as they acted upon the manners and morals of daily life. It is to be observed that Mr. Warton's leaning is any thing but averse in spirit from the times upon which he has shed so vast an influx of light; but his candour and sound feeling equally induce him to draw the following deductions.—I need scarcely say that no one could have a vaster stock of *data* to argue from:—

"As we are approaching to Chaucer, let us here stand still and take a retrospect of general manners. The tournament and carousals of our ancient princes, by forming splendid assemblies of both sexes, while they inculcated the most liberal sentiments of honour and heroism, undoubtedly contributed to introduce ideas of courtesy, and to encourage decorum; yet the national manners still retained a great degree of ferocity, and the ceremonies of the most refined courts in Europe had often a mixture of barbarism which rendered them ridiculous. This absurdity will always appear at periods when men are so far civilized as to have lost their native simplicity, and yet have not attained just ideas of politeness and propriety. Their luxuries were inelegant,—their pleasures indelicate,—their pomp was cumbersome and unwieldy. In the mean time, it may seem surprising that the many schools of philosophy which flourished in the middle ages should not have corrected and polished the times. But, as their religion was corrupted by superstition, so their philosophy degenerated into sophistry: nor is it science alone, even if founded on truth, that will polish nations; for

this purpose the power of imagination must be awakened and exerted to teach elegant feelings, and to heighten our natural sensibilities. It is not the head only that must be informed, but the heart must also be moved."—*Warton's Hist. English Poetry;* Section xi.

It is to be recollected that these observations are on the general manners and spirit of the times, and with no more immediate reference to Gaston de Foix than as following the anecdotes of the customs of his court, which are so graphically given by Froissart. They are marked by all Mr. Warton's moderation of judgment and of tone, but still they do, I think, form a very remarkable contrast to the somewhat parallel summary which I have quoted from Mr. Hallam.

[9] *Thus, as I have shewn you, the Count of Foix slew Gaston his Son; but the King of Navarre gave the occasion of his death*, p. 98.

This is a very easy method, truly, of shifting the guilt of murder upon another's shoulders. But, indeed, the guarded and dainty manner in which the whole narrative is given is highly entertaining—or, rather would be so, if it related to any subject less sad and tragical. Sir Espagne du Lyon, like an old stager, was too careful to entrust to his chronicling friend the circumstances of so dark a story as coming from his authority. And it is to be wondered at that Froissart could find any one in the count's service to give him information on the subject. It must have been, in truth, a very delicate matter to have touched upon, under the roof, and within the immediate power, of one who had shewn himself so little scrupulous as this

"perfect" count;—and, accordingly, the cautious phraseology of the squire is highly characteristic and curious. The way in which he endeavours to shew the innocence of the intentions of the young man, and the doubt he leaves upon the act of assassination, whether it was done purposely or in part by accident, is sufficient to prove that diplomatic language was known in courts even before diplomatic forms were invented. The "little knife" which protruded "not an inch" from his hand, and its point "entering a little into his son's throat," into "a certain vein,"—the jugular, poor fellow!—cannot but remind the reader of what Rabelais says by way of a joke, here turned into such very sad earnest:—"*Il sortit de sa pochette un gentil petit coutelet, dont il voulait m'esgorgiller tout doucettement.*" With the exception of the *pochette*, this climax of dainty diminutives was realized in the courtier-like account which the squire at Orthes gives of his old master cutting the throat of his young one, with the *gentil petit coutelet* which he chanced to have in his hand to pare his nails withal. For the rest, I leave it to the feelings even of my least feeling readers to consider the state of society in which such things were so common as to cause but little remark, and no loss of reputation. What a state of society indeed!—the husband haggling with the wife for the ransom of her kinsman—the wife taking refuge with the brother—the king *Mauvais*, (not *par excellence*, but) by intensity and superiority of *badness*—then wishing, yet dreading, and justly dreading, to return—then the philtering and poisonous powder—the son of dubious faith—the father of undoubted treachery and violence!—What a family!—what times!—what a "praise-

worthy *perfect* knight and nobleman!"—Reader, these are the *good* old times!

[10] *Then we left our talking for that time*, p. 104.

Old Froissart's love of the marvellous—his three-parts belief—his garrulousness—his intense thirst of news, whether important or only of gossip—all these propensities are shewn in a very curious light during the course of his Christmas residence at the court of Gaston de Foix. The exquisite mixture of pedantry and superstition with which he brings in the story of Actæon is inimitable. Being bred a churchman, and also having cultivated letters with great eagerness and success, he was far better instructed than the great majority of his contemporaries. His having left a work which has lived, (of which, by the way, he seems never for a moment to have entertained the shadow of a doubt,) is a sufficient proof of how very superior he was in learning to nine-tenths of even the educated persons of his time. Yet, how superb the solemn foppery with which he quotes the story of Actæon!—how curious, how extraordinary his mixing and confusing the Heathen fable with the superstitions of his Christian faith! Nay, he even conjoins the metamorphosis of Actæon with a scriptural phrase, which gives a completely different turn to the point of the classical story:—"And, incontinent, Actæon was turned into an hart, who naturally loveth the water." One would scarcely have thought that the language of the Psalmist would have been applied (and that by an ecclesiastic) to the profane poetry of Ovid!

To the peculiar independence of the Biscayans I have

already alluded in the third Note. There is *still*, I believe, even at this day, a small republic enshrined in the laps of land so common in the Pyrenees; of the existence of which, even the French are, for the most part, almost ignorant.—See the *Revue Encyclopedique* for December, 1824, p. 772, Art. 333.—And also Vol. XVII., p. 221.—The name of this valley is *Andorre*.

[11] *Two Clementynes and two Urbanists*, p. 106.

It is a remarkable instance of both the power and the diplomatic skill of Gaston de Foix to have induced Clementyne and Urbanist bishops to sit at the same time at his board. The reciprocal anathemas which these two worthies (Clement and Urban) dealt out against each other, each calling his antagonist anti-pope, almost Anti-Christ, each respectively consigning to eternal torment the adherents of the other; this state of things could scarcely have existed—would certainly have had no force at any other era. The nicety of the English adherents of Urban attacking the Earl of Flanders, who also acknowledged Urban, but who was the vassal of France, where Clement was recognised *, is a most curious practical commentary upon the benefits of feudal tenures, and the earnestness of papal controversial wars. The relative merits of the case, and demerits of the parties, are almost, even as to interest, obsolete. I shall, therefore, content myself with translating the following short summary of the facts from the *Essai sur l'Esprit des Mœurs*.

"Since the times of Clement V., Rome had been with-

* See the account of the descent of the Bishop of Norwich, Note [5.]

out popes. The Limousin, Gregory XI., who, at last, transferred the holy see to Rome, did not understand a word of Italian. In 1376, he yielded to the representations made to him by the Italians; and the holy see was re-transferred from Avignon to Rome, after an interval of 72 years. But this only plunged Europe into new dissensions. It caused the great schism of the West. At that time, the holy see possessed only the patrimony of St. Peter in Tuscany, the Campagna of Rome, the country of Viterbo and Ovietto, the duchy of Spoletto, Benevento, and a small part of the March of Ancona. All the countries afterwards united to his dominions, belonged to lords,—vicars of the empire, or of the papal see. Since 1138, the cardinals had put themselves into the possession of excluding the people and the clergy from the election of the pontiffs; and since 1216, it was necessary to have two-thirds of the suffrages to be canonically elected. There was at Rome, at the time of which I speak, only sixteen cardinals: eleven French, one Spaniard, and four Italians. The Roman people, notwithstanding its taste for liberty, notwithstanding its aversion from its masters, wished for a pope who should reside at Rome, because they hated the ultramontanes much worse than they did the popes; and, above all, because the residence of the popes drew great riches to Rome. Accordingly, on the death of Gregory XI., when the holy college met to elect a successor, [1378], the Romans threatened to exterminate the cardinals if they gave them a foreign pontiff. The electors, frightened out of their lives, named as pope, Brigagno, bishop of Bari, a Neapolitan, who took the name of Urban. He was a man impetuous and fierce, and, for those very reasons, lit-

tle fitted for such an office. Scarcely was he enthroned, when he declared, in full consistory, that he would bring to their senses* the kings of France and of England, who, he said, disturbed Christendom by their quarrels. These kings were Charles the Wise, and Edward III.† The cardinal de la Grange, not less impetuous than the pope, shaking his fist at him, told him 'he had lied;' and these three words plunged Europe into a discord of forty years.

"The greater part of the cardinals, even the Italians, shocked at the fierce temper of a man so little fitted to govern, withdrew themselves into the kingdom of Naples. There, they declared the election of the pope, effected through violence, to be null and void; and they unanimously proceeded to the election of a new pontiff. The French cardinals then had the satisfaction (a sufficiently rare one) to deceive the Italian cardinals. They promised the tiara to each Italian separately; and then they elected Robert, son of Amadeus, Count of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. Then Europe was divided. The Emperor, Charles IV., England, Flanders, and Hungary, acknowledged Urban; to whom Rome and Italy also obeyed. France, Scotland, Savoy, and Lorraine were for Clement. All the religious orders were divided; all the doctors wrote; all the universities gave decrees. The two popes treated each other mutually as usurpers and anti-christs. They excommunicated each other recipro-

* The original is "*qu'il ferait justice des rois*, &c."—a phrase for which we have no exactly corresponding English term. The Scottish dialect, however, has it in the sense in which it uses the word to "justify."—Ed.

† This is a mistake of Voltaire's: Urban was not elected till 1378; and Edward III. died the previous year.—Ed.

cally. But what became really tragical, was, that a war arose, fought with the double fury of a civil and of a religious war. In the year 1379, the nephew of Clement, with a body of Gascon and Breton troops that he had raised, marched into Italy, surprised Rome, and, in their first fury, killed every body whom they met. But soon the Roman people, rallying against them, exterminated them within their walls;—they cut the throats of all the French priests whom they could find. A short time afterwards, an army of the pope Clement, raised in the kingdom of Naples, met, within a few leagues of Rome, the troops of Urban.

"Each army bore the keys of St. Peter upon its standards. The Clementines were defeated. But it was not only the interests of the two pontiffs that were in question; Urban, the victor, intended a portion of the kingdom of Naples for his nephew. He therefore dispossessed of it Joan, Queen of Naples, the protectress of Clement, who had reigned for a long time in Naples with various success, and with a blood-stained glory. This queen was assassinated by her nephew Charles de Durazzo, with whom Urban wished to divide the kingdom of Naples. This usurper, become the quiet possessor of the throne, took very good care not to share his province with a pope who was not sufficiently powerful to compel him to it.

"Urban, more ardent than politic, had the imprudence to seek his vassal without being the stronger. The ancient ceremonial obliged the king to kiss the pope's feet, and to hold the bridle of his horse. Durazzo performed only one of these functions;—he took the bridle of the pope's horse, but it was himself to lead his holiness to prison. Urban was kept a prisoner some time in Naples; nego-

tiating continually with his vassal, and treated sometimes with respect, sometimes with contempt. The pope, at length, escaped from prison; and retired to the small town of Nocéra. There he soon assembled the remains of his court. His cardinals, and some bishops, wearied with his savage disposition, and still more with his misfortunes, took measures at Nocéra to quit him, and to elect at Rome a pope more worthy of being so. Urban, being informed of their design, caused them all to be put to the torture, in his presence. Being shortly obliged to fly from the Neapolitan territory, he set off for Genoa, which city had sent him some galleys. He dragged in his suite these cardinals and bishops maimed as they were, and chained. One of the bishops, half dead with the torture he had undergone, not being able to reach the shore soon enough, according to the fancy of the pope, he caused his throat to be cut on the way. Arrived at Genoa, he rid himself, by divers means of execution, of five of his cardinals, who were prisoners. The Caligulas and the Neros committed actions somewhat similar; but they were punished. Urban died peaceably at Rome. His creature, and his persecutor, Charles de Durazzo, was less fortunate; for, having gone into Hungary to possess himself of the crown, which did not belong to him, he was assassinated. [1389.]" *Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations;* chap. 71.

This being the state of the church at this particular period of the good old times, we may form some notion of the skill and power united, which must have been necessary to enable Gaston de Foix to unite at his board four prelates, "two Clementynes and two Urbanists." Shocking as the character and conduct of this latter miscreant

was, there can be no doubt that he was the real pope; for it was the *consequence* of this great schism which caused the power of general councils to be established. And, with regard to the question of the election being caused by intimidation,—the only ground at that time considered legal as cause to annul it, was, in point of fact, only an after-thought; for the conclave, however much they might have been influenced by fear of the people, announced peaceably enough the election of Urban to the different powers of Europe,—and if *he* had been at all peaceable, it is probable that the validity of his election would never have been disputed. After his death, a successor was elected, and another, and another. Clement, in the mean time, reigned at Avignon, and on his death, in 1394, his cardinals elected a successor to him. Thus Christendom continued, with two, sometimes with three Popes; till the famous council of Constance finished the dispute, by deposing them all—and then electing one pope in their room, Otho Colonna, who took the name of Martin V. The council of Constance lasted nearly five years; having met on the first of November, 1413, and being dissolved on the 20th of May, 1418.

[12] *The same day the Count of Foix gave to heralds and minstrels the sum of five hundred francs; and he gave to the Duke of Touraine's minstrels gowns of cloth of gold furred with ermines, valued at two hundred francs. This dinner lasted four hours*, p. 107.

I have already alluded (see Notes 2, 5, &c.) to the degree of influence as to reputation, which the minstrels at this period exercised in Europe. This caused them to be, for

the most part, loaded with rich gifts by such barons and potentates as wished to aspire to the character of brave knights, and accomplished princes. The *largess* of Gaston Phœbus was proverbial—and to this I cannot but attribute the extraordinary mildness with which his black and bloody deeds are recorded in contemporary history. Heralds were, to a certain degree, both the envoys and the chroniclers of the period. It was by them that the etiquette of the lists was regulated, and hence their knowledge and experience in devices, &c., now known as *armorial bearings*, and dignified into a distinct study, under the name of *Heraldry*. An incidental note, like this, does not afford space for any thing, like even an outline of the history and condition of the ministrels;—information the less heeded from the most interesting and learned essay on the subject prefixed to a work so popularly known as Dr. Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. That, in the later editions, is by far the fuller and most perfect, in consequence of the incorporation of some information derived from the discussions elicited by the earlier impressions. I beg also to refer the reader to Dr. Warton's History of English Poetry; The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, &c. &c., for much interesting and entertaining matter on the subject of this privileged brotherhood. In nearly all the works which treat of the manners of the period, and of the subject of the minstrels in particular, the passage in the text is alluded to, and often is quoted entire. Perhaps, with respect to the Minstrels, the most condensed, and at the

* See 'Notice of the Border-Feuds,' prefixed to the Story of the Battle of Otterbourne.

same time complete, knowledge may be gained from the Essay on the Ancient Minstrels, to which I have already alluded. The general manners of the period are more fully to be learned (exclusively of the original writers,) from Sismondi, Hallam, Villaret, St. Foix, and the chapters on those subjects in Dr. Henry's History of Great Britain. The great extent, both of the period and the subjects included in this latter work, may on some particular points have rendered its portraitures open to the imputation which Mr. Hallam makes to it of being "jejune;" but, when we consider the vast mass of information which that historian has brought to bear upon all parts of the history of his country, we may be permitted to doubt whether the minute details which Mr. Hallam would seem to desire, would not be incompatible with preserving the work within any moderate compass. It may be well to add that this epithet is used *apropos* of the History of the Progress of Civil Architecture.

The Duke of Touraine, whose minstrels are represented in the text as sharing so sumptuously in the largess of Gaston Phœbus, was the brother of Charles VI., and shortly afterwards became Duke of Orleans, which has remained a royal title ever since. He and his unhappy brother seem both to have been exceedingly accomplished princes. And, indeed, sanguinary and treacherous as was the Count of Foix himself, the minor praise of accomplishments, and (for the period) intellectual cultivation, cannot fairly be denied to him. The wager between the Duke of Touraine and his brother, which should reach Paris first from Montpellier, is well known. On the progress which Charles VI. made through his southern dominions in the following year [1389], (of which the reader

will find some slight notice a few pages further in the text,) the gaieties and accomplishments incident to their youth and rank seem to have been very conspicuously displayed. At Dijôn, at Avignon, at Montpellier, at Thoulouse, and at all the great cities he visited in his journey, the young king seems to have been equally just, politic, and popular,—by his redressing the evils which the rapacity of his uncles had caused during his minority, and by the gay frankness of his manners, and the sumptuous and romantic elegancies of his court. Of course, I use these terms comparatively—with reference to the general coarseness of the manners, and backwardness of the arts, universal at that period;—with the exception, perhaps, to a certain degree, of some of the more cultivated Italian states, and, still more, of the Saracenic possessions in Spain. There can be little doubt, that Cordova and Granada were the most enlightened and polished courts of the middle ages, in every sense of the words; whether we consider the acquirements of science, or the cultivation of the more delicate arts. It is a subject for regret, that the merits of the Moorish princes and people, in the Peninsula, have been so obscured to modern readers, by the religious animosities and prejudices of their Spanish successors. They are mentioned in Christian history only for reprobation, under the very distinguishing terms of Mahound, infidels, and unbelieving dogs. One of the chief charges, as we have seen, against Peter the Cruel, was that he leagued himself with the Pagans against "Holy Church *."

* See Story of the Black Prince in Spain, Vol. I. and Notes to the same, *passim*.—The History of the Dominion of the Arabs

Perhaps, however, the most accomplished period of Transalpine history, during the middle ages, was that of which I am now treating. I mean, of course, as relates to mere personal accomplishments, and the cultivation of some of the more elegant and least important (in a social view) of the arts. In other respects I have, I hope, expressed my opinion sufficiently explicitly of its real claims to any superior praise. The wars between France and England during the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II., and of Philip de Valois, John, and Charles V. (however desolating they were to the provinces which were their seat, and however hurtful to the best interest of humanity and social improvement, by turning the almost undivided attention of men to war as to a livelihood,)—were, partly from national rivalry, and partly from the personal character and dispositions of some of the chief persons engaged, certainly calculated to produce superficial refinement and an (unsound and unstable) polish—always speaking comparatively—upon the surface of superior society. That this refinement was superficial, that this polish was unsound, became evident from their short duration in fact, as might be expected from their philosophical causes. It was the mere glitter of the Sun of Courts upon the Ice of general humanity. Beggared and made barren as the kingdoms were, by the unprincipled quarrels and wars of their rulers,—the very duration and manner of those wars, which froze up the hearts' blood of the people's resources, gave a temporary polish of factitious, I might almost say

in Spain, for which we are indebted to the industry and learning of Senhor Condé, being drawn from Arabic as well as Gothic authorities, goes far, however, to supply this deficiency.

fictitious, splendour to the small section of the general circle of the two nations, comprised within courts and camps. This is one of the chief of the circumstances which have caused the false glare which the clouds of time have contributed to direct upon this particular point of history. Our insular situation, also, freeing us (as it has since also so often done) from the actual presence of war, contributes much to the estimation with which we usually regard the times, as they are somewhat vaguely termed, of our Edwards and Henries. The devastated plains of Normandy, the commons of Paris, driven to outrage and very madness, through intolerable want, produced by intolerable oppression, present a far different picture, and authorize a very different moral.

But I have treated this part of the subject sufficiently at large already. It is a view of it, however, which never can be too often presented to the friends of humanity; and which can never be more seasonably set before them than when the descriptions of banquetings, and festivities, adorned even by the more elegant arts, by the fascinations of poetry and music, and, *outwardly*, of hospitable and courteous manners, would tend to throw into shade the blood, and violence, and treachery beneath—the sufferings of the starving poor, and the violation of all Christian charities. A few bits of money given at the gate, 'for the love of God,' as the Chronicler calls it, would scarcely expiate in His sight those crimes which were the real origin of the alms given 'from fear of the devil.'

I have already, in the last note, laid before the reader the state of the heads of the church at this time. Who would recognise in these violent and evil men, the followers of Him who preached "Peace on Earth and good-

will towards Men?" It was by such acts as these, by the very reversing and (fearfully) parodying in practice the dictates of the religion which they preached, that that Religion of love, and peace, and fellowship, was made the engine, or the pretence, of hatreds, and bitternesses, and cruelties, which make the very flesh creep, and the blood curdle, but to think of. Truly the blood-bespotted Gaston Phœbus was a fitting person to hold high wassailing at Christmas, with 'Clementines, and Urbanists,' at his board! But these were the *good* old times!

[13] *Thus have I shewed you the life of the spirit Orthon;* p. 122.

This story is told by Froissart, with a grave wonder, and serious curiosity, every whit as entertaining in their way as the story itself. It appears, in good truth, to have been to him matter of most puzzling cogitation and wonderment during the remainder of his life. I regret that *my* cogitations on the subject have not enabled me to add any further information, for the oblectation of such of my readers as may be curious in the matter of ghosts and spirits. If the Voice had been faithful to the clerk of Catalonia, to enforce the payment of his *dismes*, or tithes, it need not have caused much marvel—for such warnings have very opportunely been at hand, for such purposes, in most periods of Church history. The only wonder is, that Orthon should abandon the clerk for the sake of the Lord of Corasse. If it had been some two hundred years, or so, later—there was a certain Lord of Corasse * who

* This was the castle where the childhood of Henry IV. was passed.

might have caused greater infidelities than that of Orthon as a tithe-proctor.

Considering that the locale was a mountain castle, where meteoric phenomena so often give rise to strange *appearances*, which Superstition has connected with what (somewhat Irishly) has been called the *invisible* world,—it is strange that Orthon should only have been *heard*, and never been seen, except in the shape of the two straws, and in that of the unfortunate sow, which the knight set his dogs to worry. Even in this case, we find the usual cruelty of the period peeping forth; one might be tempted to add, and its treachery also: for, after what had passed, it is difficult to suppose that the knight did not *believe* the sow to be the promised appearance of his familiar. Certainly the carcass of a very lean sow is a somewhat less romantic habitation than that of the delicate Ariel in "the cowslip's bell."

[14] *The Count of Foix made a dinner to the Duke of Touraine and the other great lords of France;* p. 132.

[15] *Such readers as may wish for short notice of the precious deeds of old Gaston de Foix, will find a brief summary of them in Note* 15.—p. 146.

Among the works which treat either wholly, or incidentally, of the countries comprised within the Pyrenæan isthmus, which I have looked into for materials for the notes to the present story,—my attention has been drawn to one very lately published, which, for completeness in all respects, will probably go far to supersede the separate

works upon the separate countries, in so far as they treat of them individually *. I have met with it since the earlier portion of these notes has been written; and I now avail myself of its ample, and yet condensed, information, to perform my promise to my readers of giving some little detailed notice of Gaston Phœbus's previous life, as also of the other matters to which the references in the text are made. When I say that the voluminous bill-of-fare below is amply borne out by the substantial information provided, I need not add any further testimony to its merits and interest. Among the lithographic views are the castles of Lourde, Corasse, Pau, &c. &c. I cannot say, however, that the map, though I doubt not that it is equally correct as it is minute, deserves equal praise; for, from the preposterous idea of making the south the top of the map, and the north the bottom, it becomes quite puzzling, and almost unintelligible, to persons accustomed to the ordinary positions of geography.

As Gaston Phœbus died when on a hunting expedition,

* The detailed title-page of the work I allude to, is as follows:—it supersedes the necessity of any further explanation of its nature from me. "Itinéraire Descriptif et Pittoresque des Hautes-Pyrénées Françaises; Jadis Territoires du Béarn, du Bigorre, des Quatre-Vallées, du Comminges, et de la Haute-Garonne; Contenant, outre la description des lieux, l'histoire de ces diverses contrées, et de leur antiquités; un Précis sur la population, l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce; un aperçu sur les mœurs, les coutumes, les sciences, les beaux-arts, la littérature et le langage. Orné d'une carte géographique, et de quinze vues lithographiés. Dedié à Monseigneur le Dauphin, par P. La Boulinière; Ch. de l'ordre Royal de la Legion d'honneur; Sous-préfet d'Etampes. 3 tomes, 8vo. Paris, 1825.

and was particularly attached to and skilled in the sport, having even composed a treatise on the art, I shall begin by translating the following very lively description of the bear-hunts in the Pyrenees *: this may also serve as a corollary to the Biscayan hunt mentioned in the text, p. 101 :—

"The precipitous mountains which crown the narrow *enceinte* of Gabas, are the customary retreats of the bears which ravage this canton. They often leave their dens to fall with ferocity upon the flocks, among which they make great carnage. The shepherds are, thence, obliged to leave, before the time, the pasturages where their flocks are no longer in safety. To prevent their attacks, or even to meet these savage and dangerous animals, man, ever jealous of his superiority, goes boldly to attack them. We shall now proceed to shew the manner in which the mountaineers fight the bears in all the great valleys, where they abound more or less.

"The chase is an exercise, or, if you will, an art †,

* In a late popular work, the bear-hunts in this district are made the subject of one of the stories. The interest, however, is so much thrown upon (not very pleasing) moral circumstances, as to render the bear-hunting subordinate in importance, if not in quantity. The reader will see that I allude to the tales published under the name of "Highways and Byways."

† "After Love, the Chase is, perhaps, of all the pleasures of this lower world, that of which there has been said the most good, and the most evil. Plato calls it a divine exercise; St. Augustin, a savage amusement. Lycurgus recommends it to the Greeks—Moses forbids it to the Jews. Pliny assures us that it gave rise to the monarchical state. Sallust wishes that it should be abandoned to slaves—Buffon wishes it to be reserved for heroes. *L'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin.*"—All this

which, in the savage state, was the first and most considerable of the resources of the human race. But its actual products are but slight, in comparison with those which we owe, I will not say to agriculture, but even to rural economy. Thus, the chase is no longer any thing but an amusement; nevertheless, it contributes to the pleasures of life, and to the luxuries of the table; and, for both these reasons, as well as with regard to manners and customs, it merits some particular notice. A description, although a statistic one, cannot offer a complete treatise on hunting and fishing, any more than on the other arts, of which it pretends only to point out the products; it is, therefore, necessary that it should confine itself to making known the modes peculiar to the country, dwelling upon any remarkable particulars which may promise to gratify the curiosity of the reader.

" The Upper Pyrenees have produced, and still produce, almost every species of animals of the deer kind, which inhabit the other mountainous regions of Europe, south of Sweden. The red, and fallow deer, the antelope, the mountain-goat, even the rain-deer, as it would seem, existed among them in abundance in the time of Gaston Phœbus. Buffon says, indeed, that Cæsar has a passage in his commentaries which cannot be applied to any other animal than the rein-deer; and which would

depends a good deal, I think, on the species of hunting. Our *English* hunting, however exhilarating in the field, cannot well be defended, as to humanity, when we coolly think it over in our closet. Mr. Martin, of Galway, has, it seems, more ancient, and more holy, persons to bear him out than, probably, even he himself was aware of.

go to prove that it then existed in the forests of Germany. And, fifteen centuries after Julius Cæsar, Gaston Phœbus seems to speak of the rein-deer, under the name of *rangier*, as of an animal which existed in his time in our forests of France; he even gives a tolerably good description of it, and details the manner of hunting and catching it. As his description cannot be applied to the elks; and as he also describes the manner of hunting the red and fallow-deer, the antelope, the mountain-goat, and the chamois, one cannot suppose that in the article on the *rangier*, he has meant to speak of any of those animals, or that he is mistaken in the application of the name. It would seem, then, by these positive testimonies, that the rein-deer formerly existed in France, at least in the Pyrenees, of which Gaston Phœbus was a near neighbour,—as lord, and inhabitant, of the County of Foix;—and that since that time, they have been destroyed like the red-deer, which formerly were common in that country; and which, nevertheless, now exists no longer in Bigorre, in Couserans, nor in any of the adjacent provinces. This, especially in the case of the rein-deer, which have entirely disappeared, may be attributed to the gradual clearing of the forests. What would seem to confirm this opinion, is, that the mountains on the Spanish side, being more wooded and less kept up by the inhabitants, than those on the northern exposure, still offer secure retreats to the red deer, the wild boar, the wolf, and even to some tropical animals, such as the lynx. That which was shown in the menagerie at Versailles, had been taken, according to some accounts, in the valley of Gavanie; according to others, in that of Cauterets, in the vicinity of the Pic of

Culao; it had probably passed from Spain into France, none having been seen there since.

"But on the French side of the mountains, even the wild boar is exceedingly rare, and becomes more so every day. Thus, if we except the wolf and the fox, the bear and the *izard* *, which are sufficiently plentiful, some at the foot of the mountains, others in the upland valleys, the other beasts of the chase are scarcely worth mentioning. Hares only are tolerably abundant in the vineyard country, where they are of an excellent flavour; and rabbits also may be found.

" The bear is naturally frugivorous, and accustomed to feed upon the bark and the roots of trees; but, according to M. de Buffon, will eat any thing when pressed by hunger, as he proves only too often in the Pyrenees. Less fierce, as it would seem, than that of the Alps, the Pyrenæan bear gives, nevertheless, frequent causes of alarm to the shepherd—baffles his watchfulness, and devastates his flocks, notwithstanding the care of the dogs who are afraid of him, and hold him in much greater dread than they do the wolf. But he flies from fire-arms, and does not attack men unless he be in danger of starving, or unless the latter attacks him first.

" These hardy mountaineers, to rid themselves of such an enemy, seek him even in his den, and hunt him with guns loaded with ball. Sometimes even encased in a three-fold cuirass of sheep-skin, armed with long daggers, they fight him, as we may say, body to body, and endeavour to stab him at the moment when rising on his

* The name given in the Pyrenees to the Chamois.

hind feet, he is about to spring against his assailant. If the hunter miss his blow, he has no other resource but to seize the animal round the body, and clinging with his head close to the bear's neck, for fear of being bitten by him, to endeavour to throw him to the ground. If the hunter can succeed in pushing him to the border of a precipice, the bear lets go his hold, for fear of falling down it along with the man. Thus, not seldom it happens, that a combat for a considerable time, almost equally balanced, takes place between the two champions, which is not without danger for the man, as some remarkable instances are cited to prove. But in these narrations there is generally some admixture of the marvellous, as in the recitals of some traits of prowess of this particular kind." *Itinéraire des Hautes Pyrénées Françaises.* Vol. I. pp. 184-188.

I hope my sporting readers (if I should have the fortune to have any) will consider the above extract as some compensation for the scantiness of the 6th Note, in which I pleaded my ignorance of canine ancient history, as an excuse for being somewhat brief in my discussion touching the race "Allans." I have not had the chance to meet the learned treatise on Venery of Gaston Phœbus himself; and, I fear, I have been somewhat remiss in seeking it. I think, however, that a personal struggle with a bear, is an exploit equal to "switching a rasper," in Leicestershire, on the back of a hunter, "equal to any weight." Gaston Phœbus was, as we have seen, "a mighty hunter," and cared little whether "his prey was man" or beast. We might say all was game that came within his clutch.

I shall now proceed to give a short précis, taken from the same interesting work, of the life and reign of Gaston Phœbus, with which I shall conclude my notes to the present story. I must premise that M. La Boulinière seems to be partially bitten with the extraordinary, though pretty general, mania of regarding Gaston as an eminent and great man. It may be not unamusing to the reader to contrast the latter part of the account with the text, p. 97. It is the same circumstance, and taken from the same authority; neither is it very materially altered as to fact;—but how completely qualified and softened as to manner!—I shall, however, begin at a period somewhat anterior, to give the reader some more particular information concerning that independent sovereignty of Béarn, which was so peculiar a feature in its history; and of which such frequent mention has been made in the course of this story:—

"We have already seen that this ancient land of liberty and independence had its particular constitution, and that it formed a sort of representative monarchy before it merged in the kingdom of France, of which it was to partake the noble destinies in giving to it a sovereign.

"We have seen, in the Introduction, in the slight historical sketch of the Duchy of Gascony, that it was possessed up to the ninth century by the descendants of *Eudes*, great nephew of Dagobert; that this duchy at last passed from the hands of the race of Clovis; and that the county of Bigorre and the viscounty of Béarn, were left to the last branches of that race, *Donat-Loup* and *Centulfe*; which, as regards the latter, is proved by the charter of the monastery of Alaon, granted by Charles the Bald,

in 845. The grandson of Charlemagne was not afraid of acknowledging that the princes of Gascony, treated as rebels by all the historians of France, were the descendants of the Frankish kings, and legitimate sovereigns of their principalities."—*Id. Ib. pp.* 275-7.

Then follows a genealogy of the Merovingian princes of Béarn, continued through all the subsequent houses of succession and intermarriage. I shall, however, omit the genealogy itself, and pass on to the historical commentary upon the different races :—

" The authority of the princes of Béarn was never absolute; the clergy and the nobles to whom the third estate was ultimately joined, participated always in the powers of the government, under the title of the States of Béarn. These states sometimes even abused their preponderance at periods of indirect succession, and during minorities,—an inconvenience frequently resulting from a too powerful aristocracy.

" The princes of Béarn began by securing the independence of their territory as regarded other sovereignties. The first condition of every state is to have a separate existence. After the extinction of the line of the dukes and counts of Gascony, in the person of Brisce, sister of Sancho, Centulle III. declared the independence of Béarn, with the consent of the Count of Armagnac, his competitor for the county of Gascony, to whom he yielded that title by mutual agreement. Centulle IV. obtained from William, Duke of Aquitaine, son and successor to Guy Geoffrey, for the reward of his services, the cession without reserve, to him and to his successors, of all the rights which had belonged in the fiefs of Béarn and the annexed lands, to the Counts of the Gascons. This important title confirmed

by right, the fact of independence; for it was necessary that the Dukes of Aquitaine, heirs of the suzeraineté of the Dukes of Gascony, and chiefs of the house of Béarn, should acknowledge this independence to make it completely legitimate. From this moment, the princes of Béarn may be counted among the sovereigns of Europe; and it is here that properly begins the history of this modern sovereignty.

"This Centulle, by a charter written in the vulgar tongue, an evident mixture of corrupted Latin and Spanish, gave to the inhabitants *des fors plus avantageux que les fors de Béarn.* These laws are cited in the charter of Oleron, published in 1080, and, therefore, preceded the assizes of Jerusalem, which were published by Godfrey de Bouillon, only in 1099.

"The Viscounts of Béarn, from the moment of their independence, enjoyed all the rights of sovereigns under the feudal system consolidated in France, under the first Capetian kings. They were legislators and supreme judges in their dominions; they transmitted their sovereignty without division to their eldest born; and their daughters succeeded in default of males. Masters of their territory, they possessed exclusively its revenues;—which consisted in personal domains; in profits upon the fiefs, in the nature of fines and sales; and in the right of lodgment or hostelry, with a *cellarer* and a *squire*;—in mulcts, confiscations, and judiciary forfeitures of inheritance.

"The Dukes of Gascony had minted money on their own account, in their palace of Morlans; this continued under the Viscounts of Béarn, substituted in their place; and, in consequence of the independence of the country,

the mint of Béarn continued even after the suppression of those of all the lordships of France.

"Gaston IV., while his brother Bernard was collecting and digesting the customs of Bigorre, confirmed the *fors* of Béarn; and, having returned from the Holy Land, after the battle of Ascalon, in 1099, he patronised the system of redemptions and affranchisements then in vogue, for the pecuniary needs which the Crusades occasioned.

"Among other acts, in the year 1101, he declared free the town of Morlans, for the good of his soul, and for the honour of God, and of St. Peter of Cluny, and of Ste. Foi of Morlans. He added to it a charter of corporation with exemptions and privileges. Thus became formed in Béarn, as elsewhere, the third estate, by the bodies of corporation; whilst, up to that time, there had been known only the clergy and the nobles."—*Id. Ib. pp.* 288-91.

The successors of Gaston IV. seem, according to their partial historian, to have followed in great measure in his footsteps. I have already given [Note 4] the account of the manner in which the House of Foix succeeded to the sovereignty of Béarn. M. La Boulinière thus continues his historic summary:—

"Gaston VII., last of the house of Moncade, died without male heirs, anno 1290, and was succeeded by Bernard III., Count of Foix, husband of Margaret, his youngest daughter. The first princes of the first line of Foix had violent feuds with the Armagnacs, who had pretensions to the inheritance of Béarn, in right of Mathilda, Countess of Armagnac, sister of Margaret, Countess of Foix, both daughters and heiresses of Gaston VII. These bloody quarrels did not cease

before the reign of Philip de Valois. By a decree in arbitrement of that prince, the countries of Rivière Basse, and Carcassis, were assigned to the Count of Armagnac, and Gavardan and the rest remained to Gaston IX., who was grandson of Roger Bernard. His predecessors, however, in the mean time, all took part in the wars of France against the English. Philip the Fair, to secure to himself a strong support against the common enemy, married Gaston, only son of Roger Bernard III., and of Margaret, his wife, to Joan of Artois, daughter of Robert Count d'Artois, and of the mother of St. Louis; and this alliance with the House of France added a new degree of power to the sovereigns of Béarn. Roger Bernard lived almost all his life at Orthes. He was overtaken by death in 1302, while on a visit to his States of Foix.

"The long war, occasioned by the rivalry of France and England, and the vast extent of the dominions of the Count of Foix, rendered necessary frequent absences from Bearn. On the part of Gaston IX., who, by a regulation of 1338, provided for the internal administration of his dominions, by instituting, or, at least, by designating more clearly the powers and duties of the already existing office of Seneschal; who was charged to fill his place in the courts of justice, to sit with the jurors, and to make progresses through the country with them, for the purposes of judging,—it was necessary that he should be approved by the barons, that he should swear to be just and loyal, and to keep the *fors* and the customs without ever violating them. The viscount swore at the same time to ratify and respect every thing which his seneschal might do, during the period of his office.

"Gaston proved himself the faithful ally of Philip de Valois, and did not abandon him in his reverses. He defended Tournay against the English, in the first war of Flanders; in the second war, he served France ten years with his sword, his counsel, and his treasure. He advanced in 1344 a sum of 37,000 livres, for which Philip ceded to him the viscounty of Lautrec. The Sire d'Albret took the side of the English. Gaston besieged and sacked Tartas, with the assistance of some of the most distinguished gentlemen of his dominions. At length, a truce of three years was concluded between France and England. Gaston took advantage of this calm, to go to seek a new war in Spain. The States of Béarn in vain opposed themselves to his departure; he left them, for regent, Eleonora his wife, and confided to her the guardianship of Gaston Phœbus, his only son.

"The siege of Algesiras was formed by the kings of Castile, of Arragon, and of Navarre. The indefatigable Gaston went to fight along with them. He was killed there, in action, on the 7th of June, 1344; and his body was carried to the convent of Bolbonne.

"This prince had been married, when he was fifteen, to Eleonora of Comminges, who was of a much more advanced age. She expressed her affection for him, in an answer which she made to some one, who was speaking to her on the subject of this disparity of years: 'If the Count of Foix was not yet born, and that I was certain that I should have him for my husband, I would wait for his birth.'—'*Si you sabi de certan que lou Comte de Foux degesse estar mon marit, you lo speraria naxer.*' Their union had been happy, and she had herself nursed its first-born son.

"The States of Béarn gave to this son a council of regency; and the young Gaston, surnamed Phœbus, on account of his extraordinary beauty, was reared with a care, to which the successes of this prince were proportionate: his reign was the most brilliant epoch in the sovereignty of Béarn. In a short time he acquired a great reputation in the exercises of chivalry; he became equally skilled in the art of Venery; and, moreover, 'he was,' as Froissart tells us, 'a great clerk, as regarded letters, loving the gifts of minstrels, and understanding them himself, and making verses himself.' Some Béarnais songs are cited as his; and his poem in French verse is still extant on the art of hunting; of which he was passionately fond. He has left, moreover, some memoirs, printed in 1520, under the title of *Mirror of Phœbus*.

"At the age of fifteen, Gaston passed into Spain, where he first bore arms, and won his spurs in fighting against the Moors. He returned into his dominions with the reputation of a *preux* knight and a discreet captain. At his return, he married Agnes of Navarre, sister of Charles the Bad *. This king having been arrested, by order of King John, Gaston went to Paris to sue for the liberty of his brother-in-law. He was himself arrested, under the pretext of forcing him to do homage for Béarn. But although kept prisoner in the Châtelet, he answered with firmness, that he owed homage for Béarn to no one except God. The war declared by England in 1356, induced King John to restore the Count of Foix to liberty.

* See the Notices in the preceding volume, on the English Power in Acquitaine, &c.—ED.

He charged him to defend his dominions against the English, which he did with success. Gascony being ceded to England, by the treaty of Bretigny, in the year 1360, the Prince of Wales wanted Gaston to hold his dominions of him; but the Count of Foix said that 'he would not; for that the country of Béarn was so free a land that he owed homage for it to no lord in the world;' and the prince said he would make him yield to his mercy. The latter was excited against him, by the Count of Armagnac and the Sire d'Albret; but the brave Chandos, the rival * and the companion of this famous Black Prince, changed his sentiments, and inspired him with as much esteem for the Count of Foix as he had previously expressed anger. It was at this epoch that the States of Béarn granted, for the first time, subsidies to their sovereign, who, in exchange, preserved the country from all invasion and all pillage. The imposts, established under the reign of Gaston Phœbus, continued to be levied, and became perpetual, under the name of a donation made to the lord. A dispensation was accorded to all the ecclesiastics; the priests hospitallers were not to pay any tax for the churches, hospitals, and religious houses, nor contribute on these accounts to the donation to the lord. This dispensation, granted to the ecclesiastics, has appeared to M. Faget de Baure, to be by way of remuneration for the jurisdiction which had been taken from them.

"Gaston honourably received, and distributed rich gifts to divers knights who, 1366, went to make war in

* In the original *l'émule*;—of a corresponding word to which our language is in great want.—Ed.

Spain under the Prince of Wales, and under Du Guesclin, in the famous quarrel of Henry of Transtamare and of Peter the Cruel *, King of Castile. He received, and treated magnificently, the year following, the Duke of Bourbon, on his return from this war.

"A great domestic misfortune imbittered the last years of Gaston Phœbus, and put an end to the first branch of the house of Foix. It was one of the most horrible traits of the villainy of Charles the Bad, his brother-in-law, King of Navarre. Gaston, wishing to put an end to the inveterate hatred which divided his race and that of Armagnac, projected an alliance between the two families. The Count of Armagnac had a daughter, whose *enjouement,* joined to her extreme beauty, had caused her to be named *la gaie Armagnoise.* The Count of Foix had but one son; and this son in every respect resembled his father. His name, also, was Gaston; and he was the very heart of his father and of his country. It was agreed that the young Gaston should marry the gay Armagnoise. The betrothment took place, and peace was sworn between the two counts. Before his marriage was celebrated, the young prince was desirous of seeing his mother, who was separated from Gaston, whom she had rendered unhappy; and whose heart was in no degree her's; and had also been hardened by the military spirit (*endurci par l'humeur guerrière*). This princess had lived for a long time with at the court of her brother, who was steeped in crime. The first essay of this monster had been to assassinate

* See preceding Story, and Notes to the same; as also Frontispiece to Vol. I.

the constable of France, and to poison the dauphin *. He had made a mockery of the engagements which he had contracted with his brother-in-law. Having become surety for the Sire d'Albret, prisoner of Gaston, he had never paid his ransom; and the dowry of his sister was still in his hands †. Thus every thing at the court of Navarre was odious to the Count of Foix. Nevertheless he did not oppose the journey of his son. Charles gave his nephew the most affectionate reception. He kept him ten days, and sent him away loaded with presents. Among these presents was a satchel, filled with a species of powder: 'This powder,' the king said to him, 'thrown skilfully upon the dishes which are served to your father, will restore his love for your mother.' The young prince believed him, and tried the fatal experiment; he was discovered. The powder was a poison! Alas! the unhappy young man was only credulous, and he appeared criminal. His father had him confined in the tower of the castle. He assembled the states, and demanded vengeance. That vengeance was to be the death of his son. The states answered to the irritated father: 'We will not that your heir be put to death.' He is entreated, he is pressed to spare his son; at length, he promises to grant him his life. But the young prince refused to take any species of nourishment; alone in his prison, he remained stretched at length, as if he would see the light

* For the *degree* of badness of Charles the Bad, as compared with the other princes of his time, see Vol. I., *ubi suprà.*

† Even the account which Froissart received in the very court of Gaston, was less partial than this.—See Cap. III., and Note 9.—Ed.

no more. He wished to die. His father goes to entreat him to live (*le prier de vivre*). The count had a knife in his hand, and, whether he touched his son by accident, or whether the young man himself threw himself upon the blow, he was wounded. His death speedily followed this fatal interview. His body was borne to the church of the Minor Freres. 'And the father clothed himself with black, and mourned with all his court, and wept him a long time; and the whole country did not lament him less. Ten years afterwards, a knight refused to tell Froissart concerning this death, 'the matter was so piteous.'"—*Id. Ib. pp.* 303-11.

I must here beg the reader, if it be only for curiosity, to recur to the text, that he may see the original which M. La Boulinière has drawn down into this "French wire." (P. 88, *et seq.*) Even that, we must bear in mind, was told to Froissart by a squire of the Count of Foix's, and under the very roof of his castle. We may therefore conclude, that it was sugared and softened with all those exculpatory circumstances and reflections, which, leaving facts the same, so disguise them in a fine clothing of spurious and extraneous motives, causes, and details, as to leave those facts themselves no longer recognisable.—But even these glosses are nothing to what M. La Boulinière here adds, in which he makes the old ruffian, Gaston Phœbus, "more sinned against than sinning" throughout. He goes to beg his son to live, and by way of suiting the action to the word, runs his nail-knife an inch into his jugular vein!—That is one way of begging people to live, certainly. Charles the Bad, was bad enough in all conscience; but he was certainly no worse than his brother-in-law, or in some one or two instances, than John the

Good. Undoubtedly, all John the Good's children, with the exception of Charles the Wise, were as great *scélerats* as Charles of Navarre could be by any possibility of crime. The Dukes of Anjou, of Berry, and Burgundy were about as bad as violence, treachery, murder, robbery, and theft, could make them; and certainly Charles the Bad was no worse. For treachery, the kidnapping the Constable de Clisson, by the Count of Brittany, under pretence of asking his opinion on a point of taste in architecture, is, perhaps, unparalleled,—for cold-blooded and revolting treachery and cruelty combined, it is impossible that any thing can surpass Gaston Phœbus's assassination of Sir Peter Ernaut, which I have commented upon already. But Charles the Bad is the *stock* scape-goat for all the villanies of all his contemporaries (except Peter the Cruel,)—and M. La Boulinière has fallen into the general practice. He also adopts that which obtains concerning Gaston de Foix;—for he displays himself in other parts of his works to be far too sound, enlightened, and humane, *generally* to desire to colour, or to slur over, the atrocity of such deeds as are here recorded. In the notice of the castle of Lourde, (of which he gives a lithographic view,) he speaks in strong reprobation of the murder of its Châtelain, and calls it "an indelible blot on the memory of an otherwise great man."—I admit the exception, but deny the rule. It is indeed a blot, a foul, dark, and indelible one,—but I cannot admit that it was either single, or on the memory of a *great man.* His heart was, indeed, to use the expression of this author, "hardened by the warlike spirit!" I am well convinced that there is no spring whose water possesses such petrifying properties. M. La Boulinière

concludes his historical notice of Gaston Phœbus in the following paragraph. The reader, however, will perceive that he has not distinguished between the County of Foix and the Viscounty of Béarn. It was for the former that Gaston Phœbus did homage to Charles VI. at Thoulouse; —the latter, as we have seen, was specially reserved. It was a free land; and, even after having merged into the general kingdom of France, by giving to it a king in the person of Henri IV.,—it so continued, (as in the parallel case under James I., in our own country,) until the undistinguishing tyranny of Richelieu swallowed up all rights, privileges, and distinctions, in the vortex of his iron rule:—

"There was left to Gaston only two illegitimate children, Yvain * and Gratian; to whom he was strongly desirous of transmitting his dominions, but to which they were not competent to succeed. It was in vain that he had with Charles VI. a magnificent interview at Thoulouse; and that, in order to obtain what he desired, he did to the King of France that homage-liege, which he had refused in his youth, even in irons. Paternal weakness could only obtain this vague promise: 'If it should arrive in our time that the land of Foix should become vacant by the death of our cousin, we will determine in

* Ivan, Evan, Yvan, Juan, and John, are all synonymous. In Béarn, the language of which participates of both Spanish and French characteristics, this confusion very naturally arose, the J being pronounced, in the former language, both like the English H and the English Y; but never according to our and the French pronunciation of that letter. The name is indiscriminately spelled in the original; but, for uniformity's sake, I have throughout spelled it "Juan," which is, to this day, pronounced in Spain as we should pronounce "Ouänn," or "Wänn."—Ed.

such a manner as will content Juan, and all the men of Foix.' Gaston died of apoplexy, at Orion, on the twelfth day of August, 1390, on his return from a bear-hunt, and as he was about to sit down to table. The king of France, by the influence of the Duke of Berri, who received thirty thousand francs from Castelbon, favoured this last, who, moreover, was the rightful heir, and already acknowledged by the states of Béarn. Juan, the son whom Gaston had so much loved, had a part of the treasure amassed by his father. He retired to the Court of France, where two years after his arrival, he perished in that famous masquerade of Savages, of which he was one of the authors. His brother Gratian had married Isabella of Lacerda, sprung from the kings of Castile, and sole heiress of the Duchy of Medina-Cœli. He settled in Spain, where his descendants still exist."—*Itinéraire des Hautes-Pyrénées Françaises.* Vol. I. p. 311.

Juan of Foix appears to have been a very noble and devoted person;—for, when enveloped in flames, in consequence of the frightful accident which arose at the celebrated festival to which allusion is made above, his sole anxiety seems to have been that the king should be saved; fearing that, from the similarity of all those who were attired as wild-men, he might not be recognised in the confusion. He kept crying "Save the king! save the king!"—and, it is said, that but for his anxiety to point out which the king was, he might himself have, perhaps, escaped. The young Duchess of Berri, who, by wrapping her mantle over the blazing flax which formed the king's dress, saved his life, was the same of whose nuptials we have seen some account in the present story.

I now leave my readers to judge how far Gaston Phœbus deserves the reputation he seems so generally to have acquired in history, of a great and good prince. That he was a brave and accomplished one, I am far from denying;—but a more cruel, treacherous, and blood-stained ruffian, it would be difficult to point out even during the middle ages. His "largess" seems to have stood him instead of all other "vertuousness."—"And now," as old Froissart says, "there is no more mention made of him; God have mercy upon his soul!"—There scarcely could be a case in which such a prayer would be more needed!

END OF THE NOTES TO GASTON DE FOIX.

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF THE

COMPANIONS.

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF THE

COMPANIONS.

[BEING INTRODUCTORY TO THE STORY OF AYMERGOT MARCEL.]

AMONG the traits which paint the historical character of the fourteenth century, there is none more curious, certainly none more peculiar, than the existence of the Companies of Adventure, or Associations of Free Companions; with which, as such, we first meet, in general history, on the peace of Bretigny in 1360. To illustrate and exemplify their manners and modes of life, I have chosen the following narrative; which contains the later adventures, and ultimate fate of a very celebrated member of this worthy confraternity. It is distinguished, in Froissart's history, by being one of the very few episodes, complete in themselves, which he has left to us, as illustrative of peculiar manners or races of men. Unlike the other selections which I have made from this writer, the Story of Aymergot Marcel stands in the original perfect as a whole, just as the reader will find it here;—with the exception,

only, of my having broken it into chapters,—knowing of old the necessity of such resting-places for the reader, even when ambling along the easy road of a novel or story of romance.

I shall, in the first place, however, give a brief account of the historical character and appearances of the very remarkable race, of one of the individual leaders of whom the reader will subsequently find so interesting an account. Froissart appears to have taken considerable pains in the composition of this narrative. It was of a nature to place him at once (if I may so speak) upon both his hobbies—romantic adventure, and the depicting of peculiar manners.

When I say that we first meet with the Free Companions, as such, in general history, upon the peace of Bretigny, I must be understood as speaking with considerable limitation as to the signification of the term. The employment of mercenaries arose directly and inevitably from the general introduction of the Feudal System. As the universal tenure under that system, through every degree and subdivision, was for the vassal to serve his suzerain in war; and as those suzerains, whether kings, or counts, or subject barons, were pretty generally at war in some way or another,—it speedily became the practice both to limit the service as to duration; and, by degrees, to be permitted to find substitutes for that service altogether. The limitation of time being once permitted, substitution found favour in the sight of those who were to be served. The very generality of war rendered some

arrangement of this sort imperatively necessary. It was impossible that the earth could be tilled, or that any agricultural labours could go forward, if all the cultivators, herdsmen, and shepherds were *out* with their lord, whether in foreign or domestic war. Hence, in early history, we frequently find all manner of expedients resorted to, to retain the army in the field after the period (commonly, I think, forty days) of its feudal service had expired. Those who chose to remain for a further period were paid; and those who were by profession *soldiers*, or *mercenaries*, (for the terms originally were, as their derivation shews, synonymous) were engaged from the first without any reference to the duration of feudal service. These were ordinarily foreigners to the service in which they were. In the turbulent period of Henry II.'s reign, his best troops were Walloons and Brabanters. It was by means of their courage, skill, and fidelity, that this great prince and skilful captain was enabled to make head against the repeated and formidable coalitions which were formed against him.

Thus the practice first obtained for paid armies to remain embodied, after the expiration of the term of feudal service; and, from this, the transition was easy to permit a pecuniary compensation to stand in lieu of personal service. This, in the first instance, was acceptable to all parties. Those who preferred the peaceful occupations of domestic life were not dragged from their homes to form unwilling, and therefore comparatively inefficient, warriors, for a few weeks in

the year. It was less galling to them to pay than to serve; and the troops thus paid, making arms the chief occupation of their lives, were far better soldiers in every respect than the raw and temporary levies of vassals could possibly become. I have said that these professional mercenaries were commonly foreigners to the state in whose service they were for the time employed; because, even in those times, it was unusual for any one state to be *always* at war, and, therefore, these bands would then pass into the service of the next people whose quarrels might need their aid, and whose pay and prospects of plunder might be sufficiently tempting to their avarice.

Several circumstances, however, contributed to prevent this system becoming matured till the wars between England and France, in the fourteenth century. The crusades which, in round numbers, may be said chiefly to have flourished during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, afforded a ready, and almost constant, outlet to stirring spirits throughout Europe. They offered at once, change to the restless and fickle, glory to the warlike, riches to the greedy, and atonement for all iniquities to the superstitious. After their final discontinuance, which may be dated at the fall of the Templars*,

* The reader will see that I here speak only of the Crusades in Palestine; and of those under St. Louis. Those which were preached against the Albigenses; and, subsequently, against the Moors, in Spain and in Barbary, do not, in the popular acceptation of the term, come into our notion of *The* Crusades. During the Schism of the West, as my readers will already have seen, the rival Popes preached Crusades against each other. See Notes 11 and 5, to the preceding story.

the German mercenaries chiefly found occupation in the quarrels of the Italian States;—while all similar spirits within the compass of our own islands, the Netherlands, France, (including the numberless petty independencies which are *now* included in that vast kingdom, such as Brittany, Dauphiny, and the countries bordering on the Pyrenees,—together with those of the Christian part of Spain,—Navarre, Arragon, Castile, Biscay, *&c.*),—all these, I say, found ample occupation in the wars incident upon the great contest for the French crown from the early part of the reign of Edward III. till the middle of that of Henry VI., a period of more than an hundred years. There were many under-plots and episodes to the main action. The wars of Brittany—the dissensions in Flanders—the wars of Castile—and those springing therefrom between Castile and Portugal,—all these were certainly sufficient to give full employment to those employed in the pastime of cutting throats—and, (succeeded in England by the Wars of Roses, which gave us, in our own country, a taste of what it *is* to be the seat of war,)—left but a very reduced number to play the part of cut*tees* for some time to come. It is a fact but little attended to, but undoubtedly not the less certain, that the population of France diminished visibly during the prevalence of the English wars; as that of England subsequently did during the contest of York and Lancaster. This, of itself, is no slight proof of how dreadful it is for a country to be the seat of war, in comparison with a foreign

struggle of whatever length of duration. During the wars of Edward III.'s time, the prosperity of England increased;—while it is chillingly painful to humanity to reflect upon the sufferings which the rival country underwent. It is said, and I believe most truly, that the devastation of Normandy by the English was traceable in that unhappy province at the expiration of nearly an hundred years. The excesses of the *Jacquerie*, (which, perhaps, with equal justice with recent, and not dissimilar, scenes upon the same stage, might be termed "the accursed saturnalia of an accursed bondage,") may serve to shew the dreadful and desperate state of suffering to which the people were reduced.

At length, the state was once more at peace; but not so the country. Peace did not bring with it the blessings of repose; or, rather, political was not followed by actual peace. Those bands of mercenaries, which a period of more than twenty years' war had contributed to raise into permanency, now first assumed the name and character for which they were afterwards so fatally distinguished — that of Free Companies, or Companions; from the circumstance of their forming themselves into bands, under captains which they themselves elected; and acknowledging no leader but him, no law but that of the sword, no right but that of the strongest. The long continuation of the previous wars had raised, as we may say, a generation to whom every other state of things was strange.—Hitherto, therefore, they had been mercenary troops; but still fighting under ac-

knowledged banners, and in international quarrels; but now, they were at once thrown out of all employ, or prospect of employ. "Othello's occupation" was not only "gone"—but had wholly ceased to be. The waves of war seemed finally to have receded from around them, and left them high and dry upon the shore. There had, more than once, been truces between the two countries, and the competing kings; but they were, almost confessedly, only (to use an illustration from a more modern confraternity not totally dissimilar,) like the few seconds of breathing-time allowed, by the rules of our English pugilistic combats, to enable the antagonists to recover sufficient strength after a fall, to attack each other with recruited vigour. In like manner were these truces formed: they, for the most part, did not profess, and in scarcely any had the least real likelihood, to lead to peace;—they were to give fresh strength to war—not to allow time for reconciliation. But the treaty of Bretigny gave some indications of being made with a real intention of being durable. It certainly was so on one side, to which its advantages accrued—namely, our own: and, probably, was so with the other, for awhile at least; till the Antæus-like renewal of the vigour of France enabled Charles V. to take advantage of the discontents which the cold and stern behaviour of the English had excited in the ceded provinces. I have already, in the Notice of the English Power in Aquitaine, in the preceding volume, made some mention of the much-mooted question of the infraction of the

Treaty of Bretigny—and it is in no degree my desire or my design here to renew the subject. It is evident, however, that that treaty had, from the first, a character and a promise of permanency, which none of the previous truces had in any degree possessed—and which, if not fully verified, it certainly did for a considerable time retain. The mercenaries, therefore, who, from obvious causes, formed the flower of the contending armies, found that of a sudden they were to lose at once the consideration, honour, and profit which war gave to them, and to sink into the certainly less lucrative, and in their ideas more ignoble, pursuits of peace; for which neither their breeding nor habits, nor indeed the general spirit of the times, in any degree qualified them. They were, however, with arms in their hands, and with skill and habit in their use. They, therefore, determined if no work remained for them, at least to carve some out for themselves. To use the expression of Mr. Hallam, "It naturally occurred to men of their feelings, that if money and honour could only be had while they retained their arms, it was their own fault if they ever relinquished them *." Mr. Hallam is here speaking of Italy, and of a period slightly antecedent to that at which I have dated the origin of the Free Companies; but this arises from the continual wars in the North of Italy having, in some degree, occasioned the practice of mercenaries, bound

* Hallam's Middle Ages, Chap. III. Part II.

to no one service, and passing with facility from one to another, obtaining generally, at an earlier period than to the North of the Alps; and thus to the formation of Free Companies under the name of *Condottieri*, upon the prevalence of peace. But this was, at that time, confined to Italy. The same causes led to the same effects more generally, somewhat later elsewhere, for the reasons which I have alluded to above; namely, from the short duration, and unstable character from the first, of the truces previous to the treaty of Bretigny,—called, *par excellence*, the Great Peace. As soon, however, as these causes did prevail, the same effects were at once perceptible*. Indeed, it would seem that these troops, since the battle of Poitiers, when all effectual efforts ceased on the part of France, had given pretty clear indication of the course which they purposed to adopt in the event of the supervention of permanent reconciliation between the two Powers. For, one of the most curious and characteristic stipulations of the Treaty of Bretigny was that Edward III. should, if need were, join his endeavours to those of the French king to suppress the excesses of the army about to be disbanded in France. This clearly is sufficient proof that the troops had not left it doubtful as to what course they intended to pursue.

Accordingly we find them immediately after the

* For a very interesting summary of the changes of military system during the Middle Ages in Italy, see Mr. Hallam's Work, *ubi suprà*. With respect to arms and armour, an extract from it will be found in the first Note in the following Story.

conclusion of this celebrated peace, appearing in numbers so formidable as no longer to be content with the mere license of plunder, of which their campaigning habits had so long given them the taste and the custom,—but to fly at higher game, and to support their pretensions to do so with a very formidable display of real strength and power. To every thing that was urged, their answer was that "they must live;" which desirable consummation they seemed to think chiefly consisted, in allowing that privilege to no one else. A few of the more remarkable incidents attending their proceedings it is my intention here to give; premising that I shall confine myself to their story on this side the Alps, and not pass into the gulf of the history of the Italians and their Condottieri chieftains. It is not a little remarkable, however, that the most celebrated of these last was an Englishman, one of Edward III.'s knights—the well-known Sir John Hawkwood. When we consider how large a share in the general history of Europe, in more modern times, has been borne by Italy, it is curious to reflect how totally separated her earlier story is (after the fall of the Western empire) from that of Europe, north of the Alps. The distinction holds good, even in the case of this peculiar race of *brigands* of the fourteenth century.

That the Companions in France first exercised "the impartiality of general robbers" in consequence of the peace incident upon the treaty of Bretigny, is, I think, fully apparent; were it only from the fact that the continuousness of the wars had previously given them full and sufficient employment.

For, the transition from the condition of lawful soldiers and men-at-arms, to that of companies of free adventure, was easy and natural; and not, as it would seem, by any means attended with lasting, far less with indelible, disgrace. We have already seen, that the transition back again, as different potentates might need their help, was almost as easy, and certainly as quickly effected*. Du Guesclin, who was Constable, first of Castile, and afterwards of France, and who was one of the very few instances of a person not of the Blood Royal, being interred with the honours of a son of France, was, in point of fact, no more than a captain of these Free Companies,—a leader of these "Adventurers," as they often styled themselves, to avoid being called by an uglier name. And here it is that the blame may fairly be said to attach to the kings of England and of France, as such, for fostering, and employing, and recompensing these bands of privileged highwaymen, when they needed the assistance of their lances, whom, the moment before, they had been denouncing, and would have extirpated, if the Companions had not proved the stronger. This conduct undoubtedly was but little calculated to give them the right to pour forth against them, with a good grace, the same anathemas; and to use against them the same endeavours, as soon as they ceased to need their active assistance. In another point of view, also, the employment of these men was of immediate and serious detri-

* See the Expedition of the Black Prince into Spain. Vol. I.

ment to the English interests in France. To meet the expenses incurred in the payment of the Companions in the expedition into Spain, the Black Prince laid on that tax upon every hearth throughout Acquitaine, which was so prominent a cause of discontent, and so much contributed to the rising of a considerable portion of the Gascons against us; and thence, to the successful renewal of the war on the part of France. But the reader will already have seen notice of these events in the preceding volume. I am now only to trace some short sketch of the early history of these Companies as regards themselves :—

At the period of the treaty of Bretigny, most of the fortresses which the English held in France, were garrisoned by Companions, or men-at-arms, of all countries, who were in the service of England. Such of these fortresses as did not come within the ceded provinces, were to be given up to the King of France; and one of the especial stipulations of the treaty was, that this article should be enforced by the King of England, who should even, if need were, give the assistance of his arms to aid John in driving out any of the Companions who might be contumacious. From this circumstance, it is clear that considerable doubt was entertained as to whether the men-at-arms would be very willing to give up fortresses, the occupation of which caused their power, and their excursions from whence produced their riches. That these doubts were by no means visionary,—the first pro-

ceedings of the Companions on the arrival of the commissioners for carrying the peace into effect, fully sufficed to shew. For, when strictly enjoined to depart, and to give up the strong holds which they possessed, to such as might be authorized by the King of France to receive them, under pain of being reputed and treated as enemies to the King of England, they all of them made excuses and delays, and many refused outright. Some few, indeed, who were actually Englishmen, as well as in the English service, obeyed; but the great majority did no such thing. Some said they made war in the title of the King of Navarre*, while others did not think it necessary to make even this feeble excuse, but remained—"that they might live." Froissart's expressions are, as usual, highly descriptive and characteristic: "Also there were many strangers that were great captains, and great pyllers†, that would not depart; as Almains, (Germans) Brabanters, Flemings, Hainaulters, Gascons, and bad Frenchmen, who were but poor, by reason of the wars, wherefore they thought to recover themselves with making of war in the realm of France; the which people persevered still in their evil-doing, and so they did after much evil in the realm, against all them that they were in displeasure with." But it was not to these embodied men-at-arms alone that this

* See the "Digression on the Claim of Edward III. to the Crown of France;" in the "Notice of the English Power in Acquitaine." Vol. I.

† Pillagers.

unhappy country was exposed. Those captains who did yield up their fortresses according to the conditions of the treaty of peace, when they got out into the open country, disbanded their troops, and gave them leave to depart, every man according to his own pleasure. Now, these men, during the course of a war of such continuance, and carried on according to the peculiarly profitable system which the practice of individual ransom then caused to prevail, were by no means well content to return to their own countries, perhaps at a considerable distance, and certainly where no such lucrative mode of life was left for them to pursue. Froissart says, "they had so learned to pyll* and to rob, that they thought to return into their own countries was not to them profitable." He also insinuates that they might find considerable inconvenience in returning thither, on the score of "such villain deeds that they were accused of there." The character of Pistol, though considerably tinged, according to the usual anachronisms of Shakspeare, with the swash-buckler spirit of Elizabeth's time, gives, in Henry V., some notion of what these "robbers and pyllers" employed themselves in during war, even in their own countries. When he finds that his poltroonery is too thoroughly blown with the army, he determines to return to England. "Thither will I steal, and *there* I'll steal," says the redoubted Ancient; and he proceeds to put his laudable resolution

* Pillage.

into execution immediately*. The men-at-arms, however, who, after Poitiers, and its consequent peace, were flung upon the world, thought it far better to remain where they were, where they were certain of spoil, than to return into countries where this excellent custom had not hitherto so much prevailed. They, therefore, gathered together, and chose new captains among themselves; and, from this date, these men of war may be strictly called Companions,—that is, members of the Free Companies†.

Froissart adds, what is very probable, "that the election generally fell on the worst and most unhappy person of them all." For, the merit of a leader of a company of adventure may, very possibly, differ pretty materially from the usual qualities described by that term. It would appear, however, that as leaders of such companies, they had considerable skill, as well as bravery. For, probably not wishing to attract too

* The strong anachronism, however, of Ancient Pistol, will scarcely permit us to draw much historical analogy from the era at which he is made to flourish. His language throughout is that of a bully of Alsatia, in the latter part of Elizabeth's time; and even the allusions of his braggadocio vapouring are all with reference to the same era; the age when the Spaniards were the most prominent nation in Europe—for good and bad—for love and hatred.

† The *Condottieri* in Italy had arrived at this point a short time previous; they had not, however, at any time, been so thoroughly disbanded; and it arose more through the provident dispositions of an individual leader (Guarnieri) than from their own congregating, that, in a time of general peace, they had commenced partizan warfare on their own account.

much attention at first, they separated, and travelling by twos and threes, and in small numbers, they met in large companies at a rendezvous which would seem to have been previously agreed upon, on the borders of Champagne and Burgundy. These companies were then called " the late comers," for, as yet, they had comparatively little pillaged in France. Having gathered to a head, they surprised and stormed the fortress of Joinville, which had much " rich goods within," which had been brought thither by the people of the country to be in safety, as it was considered a strong and almost impregnable place.

The riches in this fortress are estimated as having been to the amount of an hundred thousand francs; which, in those days, must certainly have been a booty of very considerable magnitude. The Companions divided this among them; and making the fortress of Joinville their head-quarters, they made incursions over all the surrounding country, as far as Verdun, and into the Franche Comté, laying waste, pillaging, and putting to ransom " all and sundry." At last, having thoroughly gutted that unfortunate land, they passed onward into Burgundy, previously selling their strong hold to the country-people for a sum of twenty thousand francs. This is, in truth, a pretty tolerable specimen of the coolness of these ruffians. They storm a castle or fortress in which is congregated the greater part of the valuables of the country. They possess themselves of these, and then make the castle, the den from whence to issue, and whither

to return, to rob and ravage the surrounding district. At last, having laid bare the land within reachable distance of this their tether, they *sell* the fortress to its own proprietors, and then pass onward to play the same game in the next province!—These must have been pleasant times to live in, truly!

It must not be thought, however, that these companies were composed of merely the less considerable persons of the army;—oh, no!—Du Guesclin, if not immediately one of these, was leader of a very similar band which passed into Spain not long after, in the quarrel of Henry of Transtamare, (as we have already seen,) and *here*, that is in Burgundy, they were favoured and furthered by some of the most considerable knights and squires of the country. That, indeed, they were of very formidable power, and both in numbers and skill, equal to any armies of the time, is sufficiently apparent from the very next step of their history.

Having remained a considerable time in Burgundy, about Dijon, and Beaune, and even as far as Besançon, increasing in number as they increased in success, they at last, during Lent of the year 1361, amounted to sixteen thousand fighting men. "And when," as Froissart says, "they saw themselves to be of so great a number, then they stablished among them certain captains to whom they should obey in all things." Among the chief of these was a Gascon knight, Sir Seguin of Battefoil, who had in his company two thousand fighting men. They did not, however, separate

on account of being in such large numbers; on the contrary, they determined, it being the season of Lent, to go and see the pope and cardinals at Avignon *. It need scarcely be said what was the usual nature of their visits.

Accordingly, having passed through the country of Macon, they approached Lyons on their way to Avignon; but their road was not so clear as heretofore. For, whilst the Companions had been passing their time so profitably in Champagne and Burgundy, the king of France, alarmed at the progress of their power, had been making preparations to put them down. At one time, it would seem, that, in conformity with the treaty, he called upon Edward III. to render him assistance in this task. But, wisely bethinking himself (at least of the moral) of the fable of the Gardener and the Hare, he providently thought that it was preferable to run the chance of having his cabbages eaten by the Companions to calling in the aid of the neighbouring *seigneur* with his pack of English archers and men-at-arms, thoroughly to overrun his land, and to eat him out of house and home. The French king, therefore, intrusted his cousin, the Lord James of Bourbon, with the accomplishment of this adventure. He was a skilful captain, and a prince very popular both with the nobles, the knights, and men-at-arms, and the people generally; and, therefore, a very fitting person to

* It is to be observed that this was during the transference of the Holy See to Avignon—not during the Great Schism. Vide Note [11] to the preceding Story.

be intrusted with the conduct of an enterprise of this nature. The Lord James of Bourbon, therefore, speedily assembled a very considerable force, and passed into the County of Forests, where his sister, who was widow of the late earl of the country, governed during her son's minority: after a short time, he passed with his army, which he had now gathered together, to Lyons, in hope of meeting the Companions there, who were reported to be approaching with the intention to go to Avignon. And so they were; for, on hearing of the assembling of the Lord James of Bourbon's force, they determined, after having ascertained their numbers, which amounted to sixteen thousand men, to seek the French, instead of waiting their approach, both that they might be better able to choose their own mode of attack, and also in consideration of the moral weight they would gain by being thus foremost in striving to meet the enemy by whom they themselves were sought. At length, they took a castle called Brignais, about three leagues from Lyons, where they rested and refreshed themselves, and thoroughly reconnoitred the army of the French drawn out in the fields to fight them.

The troops under Lord James of Bourbon were, probably, fewer in number, but consisted of the flower of France,—at least, of such as the battle of Poitiers had left. He had under him two thousand lances; he was himself a skilful and favourite commander; he had advanced his son to the order of knighthood just previously to the action;—his sister's country adjoined that which the Companions had so thoroughly ravaged; and her

young son, his nephew, was also to "win his spurs" in the discomfiture of the freebooters. They had, therefore, every prospect of the victory, and every reason why they should struggle for it to the utmost.

Among the leaders in the French army was Sir Arnaud de Cervolle, known in history under the title of "the archpriest."* He had been himself a captain of adventurers, and appears to have had more caution and foresight than any of the French commanders. For, aware by experience of the craftiness of the enemy they had to deal with, he did not, as it would seem, trust too much to the indifferent appearance which the Companions made both as to number and appointments, in the eyes of the scouts whom the French knights sent out to reconnoitre. It would, indeed, have been better for the Lord James of Bourbon if he had had similar distrust; for it was part of the plan of these wily freebooters to make their force appear comparatively contemptible, and thus to draw their opponents into the error of attacking them in their strong position, on the sides and summit of a hill of considerable declivity. Among

* "In the earlier ages, the title of archpriest [*archiprêtre*] answered to that of episcopal vicar. Afterwards, it was given to priests subordinate to the archdeacons; their district was similar to that which, at the present day, belongs to rural deans. Arnaud de Cervolle, born of a noble family in Gascony, although a knight and married, enjoyed the revenue of an archpriest, according to the practice which still subsisted in some of the provinces. We see, in this custom, the vestiges of the donations of ecclesiastical revenues made to the soldiery by Charles Martel."—*Villaret*, Tom. V.

the vines and underwood with which the sides were covered, the worst appointed part of the Companions were stationed, very indifferently armed, and not more that six thousand in number. Thus, when the reconnoitrers sent out by the Lord of Bourbon communicated to him the result of their observation, he concluded that the number and the effectiveness of the Companions had equally been exaggerated by the fears of the country-people, and determined to advance to the attack at once. The "archpriest" seems to have doubted the prudence of this resolution; but the advance once determined upon, he did, as I have already stated, the duty of a brave knight, learned clerk though he was.

On advancing, however, to scale the hill, the French army found a very rough welcome. The Companions had collected cart-loads of stones on the summit, which they hurled down upon the assailants as they attempted to ascend the acclivity. The unexpected nature of this attack, and its very nature itself, which caused their utmost efforts to be directed, as it were, against an invisible enemy, speedily disconcerted, and then routed, the first line. The second and the third successively advanced, and successively met a similar fate. At last, the leader of the Companions, with the flower of his troops, came round from the hill, and, attacking the French in flank and rear, completed the defeat which the continual shower of stones had already begun. Many of the most distinguished knights in the French army were killed and wounded.

Among the latter, were the Lord James of Bourbon himself, together with his son, and that so severely, that they survived but a very few days. Among the slain was the Count of Forests, nephew to the Lord of Bourbon; and many of the most distinguished lords and knights were taken prisoners, to the number of more than an hundred.

I have been more minute in relating the circumstances of this battle, from its being the first in which the Companions made such head as to contend with the regularly-appointed army of France, and commanded by a prince of the Blood. It was fought on Friday, in Easter week, 1361; and is known in history by the name of the Battle of Brignais.

The consternation which this occasioned throughout the country may well be supposed. The successful Companions spread themselves all over the adjacent provinces; there was no fortress, and scarcely any town, strong enough to resist them; and they pillaged, robbed, and held to ransom, almost at their pleasure. By degrees, they accumulated into such numbers, that they agreed to separate; and Sir Seguin of Battefoil, who had been their chief leader hitherto, retaining under his command three thousand men, took possession of a strong hold on the Rhone, fighting while the rest, after having laid the country around almost waste, advanced towards Avignon, to put to ransom even the pope and cardinals themselves. So strong had the spirit of rapine and soldierly licence become, as to countervail, and surpass, in the bosoms

of these ruffians, even the feelings of superstition themselves. They first took possession of the bridge and town of St. Esprit, not far distant from Avignon, and where vast wealth was accumulated; and here they began to treat with the pontiff and prelates for their ransom from their clutches.

The Pope (Innocent VI.) began now to consider the matter to be waxing somewhat serious, and accordingly published a crusade against the Companions, with absolution, *à pœnâ et culpâ*, for all such as should take upon them the cross, to destroy these wicked pillagers, and to rescue his holiness and the sacred college from the indignity and danger to which they were exposed. He appointed a chief captain of the Crusade, who named a place of rendezvous near to Avignon, for the Crusaders to assemble. And, accordingly, some few began to gather together; but, when they understood that their pardons were the only wages which they were to receive for their pains, they gave the most decisive proof of the downfall of the spiritual influence of the holy pontiff, by at once separating and refusing to serve; some going over to the Companions, others retiring to their own countries, others passing into Lombardy, or Germany, or whereever there might be employment for their lances.

The Pope now saw that he could no longer hope to put down the Companions by force; he, therefore, (bitter pill as it must have been to the successor of Gregory and of Boniface,) was reduced to ransom himself

and the whole college of cardinals from these privileged ruffians. He did it, however, it must be confessed, in the only way likely to prove thoroughly effectual. He persuaded them, by a *douceur* of an hundred thousand florins, to pass into Italy, into the service of the Marquis of Montferrat, who, at that time, was at war with the Visconti, lords of Milan. The Marquis, sent for by the Pope, crossed the Alps himself to engage this formidable troop, known afterwards in Italy under the name of the White Company, to enter into his service. They were by no means unwilling to do so, as several causes combined to render it desirable for them to pass to the South of the Alps. There appeared no likelihood of any speedy revival of the wars between France and England; the richer provinces of France Proper, and now Provence, and the other rich countries adjoining the Rhone, had been pretty well stripped of what may be called the subject-matter of pillage. Moreover, Italy had already manifested its capabilities as a field for Free Companions. Lando and Guarnieri had, for some years, been practising with success the trade which had now arrived at such a pitch before Avignon;—and, moreover, an hundred thousand florins, and the papal benediction and absolution, together with the advantages held out by the Marquis of Montferrat, were better than excommunication, anathemas, and no money at all. Added to this, the plague was behind them; it had broken out in the preceding year, (1360,) in Flanders, and had

now stretched into Germany and France. The White Company, therefore, closed with the offers of the Marquis and of the Pope, and passed into Italy;—they thought that they were flying before the plague, instead of which they carried it with them *. It does not appear, however, that its ravages were very considerable in the ranks of the company itself; for, in the following year, we find it amounting to upwards of six thousand men, under the command of the adventurer who afterwards acquired such fame as a leader and skilful captain—Sir John Hawkwood.

I have already said, however, that it is not my purpose to enter upon the field of Italian history. The Companions, under the name of *Condottieri*, were, probably, of more permanent fame and weight in Italy than beyond the Alps; but, as the Story to which this brief sketch is intended to be Introductory, and that to which it may, in some degree, serve as a sort of Supplement—[The Expedition of the Black Prince into Spain, Vol. I.]—are equally unconnected with Italian history or interests, I confine myself to those who remained on the North of the Alps.

These were by no means unnumerous; for the ransom and negotiation of the Pope and of the Marquis of Montferrat had served only to scotch the evil—not

* Of course, I am speaking *more majorum*; and without at all referring to the recent debates upon the reality of contagion. The writers of the fourteenth century all ascribe the introduction of the second plague of Italy to the coming in of the White Company.

to crush it. The scattered garrisons, and smaller companies—nay, even the more considerable one under Sir Seguin of Battefoil, which had remained, after their victory over the French army, higher up the Rhone, did not choose to pass into Italy with the White Company. The major part of them, however, not long after had plenty of employment in the wars in Normandy between Charles, King of Navarre, and John—in which the Captal of Buch led a considerable number of English and Gascon companions as auxiliaries,—while Du Guesclin, who afterwards became so celebrated, was captain of those on the French side. The battle of Cocherel, which terminated completely in favour of the latter, also decided the war; and thence, after the wars in Brittany also were completely ended,—the Companions again found themselves with arms, and the habits of war, and the additional confidence imbibed by the importance which they had assumed, and the respect with which they had caused themselves to be treated.

They were accustomed to say that "they must live," a phrase of which I have already shewn the interpretation which these worthy gentlemen were in the practice of expounding. They regarded France as "their chamber,"—their own private apartment, that is,—set aside for their especial use and gratification. They throve—grew rich and saucy; and would not "take service," except upon most lucrative and even luxurious terms. There were several attempts made, about this time, to carve

out work for them; in plain language, to stir up wars to draw them off from France into some distant country, and upon service likely to last. But they were far too wily to be deceived, and far too powerful to be driven out by force. A crusade against the Turks, which the Pope caused to be held out as an enticement for them to go into Hungary, utterly failed of its intended purpose; because some few individual men-at-arms had been there shortly before, and reported but indifferently of the pleasures and profits of the service. They had got nothing there but hard blows, scanty fare, and indifferent lodging; none of which circumstances were peculiarly palatable to these plundering, booty-swollen adventurers. They refused to go, briefly and at once. At last Henry of Transtamare engaged Du Guesclin to enter into his quarrel, and to accompany him to Spain with his troops*. The events incident to these celebrated wars have already been made the subject of a separate Story— to which, and the Notes appended to it, I refer my readers for this portion of the history of the Companies†. The Black Prince, also, engaged the adventurers in his service to support the cause of Peter, the

* See "Notice of Peter the Cruel;" prefixed to the Story of the Black Prince in Spain, Vol. I.

† The reader will find this subject of the Free Companies treated in a very interesting and entertaining manner in Hallam's Middle Ages, Vol. I.—and Sismondi's History of the Italian Republics, Tom. V. VI. and VII.

historical consequences of which I have already touched upon. They were great and lasting.

When the wars again broke out between England and France, the Companions were chiefly employed on our side as garrisons of the strong places in Gascony, and in Acquitaine, generally. It is not one of the least of the remarkable circumstances attending the rapid reverses of the English, that their being totally stripped of their possessions, with the exception of a few isolated towns, was attended by no general action, by no very striking contest, such as that of Crecy, or of Poitiers, or (afterwards) of Agincourt—but by what was, if less imposing in respect to the mere glitter of glory, certainly more valuable and more rare,—an almost uninterrupted series of success upon success, of capture upon capture, till, before the death of either of the Edwards, nothing but the fame of their conquests was left to them. But of the general historical characteristics of these wars I have already spoken sufficiently at large.

The wars themselves were interrupted and succeeded by repeated truces, of various and increasing length, as the politics of the court of Richard II. and of his successor disinclined them from foreign wars. The Companions in Auvergne, and, indeed, throughout those parts of the south of France which had been under the government of the Black Prince, were, as I have said, principally employed in the garrisoning of the fortresses and strong holds which they might

retain or recapture during the existence of hostilities. From these, during the intervening truces, they would make excursions, pillaging and levying contributions upon the country with what has been termed a perfect "impartiality of plunder." At last, as the truces assumed a more permanent aspect, it was sometimes thought worth while to make especial stipulations for the *bonâ fide* discontinuance of such proceedings on the part of the adherents of either crown.

Thus, towards the year 1389-90, we find these stipulations very explicitly made, and enforced with considerable reality: no *necessary* consequence of stipulations, with whatever solemnity they might be made. There was at this time an expedition preparing against the Moors in Africa; which, preceded as it had been by a truce for several years, was, probably, the cause of the little outward favour shewn to the Companions. Several of those whose names were most notorious, were specially named in the articles of truce, and were threatened with every extremity, if they in any way infringed it. Those of the commanders who had valuable castles in their hands, received a fair equivalent in money—and many of them then went into Barbary with the expedition against the Infidels. Others, however, had too long led a life of rapine and license, to be very ready to submit to the discipline and privations of a camp They hoped, also, (and, as it would seem, not, in all

cases, without some grounds,) to be secretly favoured by the English. Still those whose names had been specially included in the truce were almost fearful of too far tempting the patience of the Government, by any outward acts of very violent infraction.

There were still, however, some who (to use their constant phrase) declared "they must live,"—and set about proving that necessity in their usual manner. Of these, AYMERGOT MARCEL may be considered as a fair specimen. The story of his adventures was manifestly a favourite "bit of composition" with Froissart. It is wholly episodical—and evidently, almost confessedly, written for the purpose of embodying, in one narrative, the most peculiar characteristics of a very remarkable race of men. It is so full in this respect, and so picturesque and graphic in all its details, as to supersede the necessity of my adding any detached fragmental anecdotes myself.

After the time of Aymergot Marcel, the Companions (except in Italy) seem to have considerably sunken into disrepute. They still occasionally filled the ranks of the two parties in the wars in France in the next century. But the general adoption of fire arms, and many other circumstances, seem, by the time of Louis XI., to have nearly caused the system to be totally disused. It is certain that they were the origin of standing armies,—and of the paid soldiery of modern history. The chief sample of them in modern times may be found in the thirty-years' war. The

auto-biography of the renowned Sir Dugald Dalgetty may be considered as an epitome of the Adventures of a Companion of times more near our own. Aymergot Marcel, perhaps, may be considered to have more of the *pyller* and less of the man-at-arms;—but, in *his* days, the terms were much more nearly synonymous.

Gentle Reader, I now commend his Story to thy perusal.

Aymergot Marcel.

AYMERGOT MARCEL.

CAP. I.

OF THE COMPANIONS IN AUVERGNE, WHO SOLD THEIR CASTLES.

A. D. 1390–1. IN this season, while this assembly was making ready to go into Barbary for a good intent, as to exalt the Christian Faith, [1] certain robbers and pyllers* in Auvergne, and Rouergue, and in Limosin, were of contrary minds. Now the countries thought themselves in surety by reason of the charter of the truce that was taken between England and France, which had been proclaimed and published in all fortresses, and before all the captains that made any war, or held any fortresses, of the English part;—for there was an article, that whosoever brake or violated any point comprised in the treaty, should receive punishment of death, without hope of any remission. And Perot le Bernois, captain of Chaluçet; Aymergot Marcel, Oliver Barbe, captain of Douzac, in the marches of Au-

* Pillagers.

vergne, were specially included by name in the charter of the truce, to the intent that if they, or any of theirs, did, or consented to do, any thing contrary, they should not excuse themselves. Some of the captains that feared to die a shameful death, or to run into the indignation of the French king, held surely all the points of the charter, but some did not so, which they dearly bought, as ye shall see hereafter.

Ye shall know, as it hath been here-before rehearsed, how John, Count of Armagnac, and Bernard, Dauphin of Auvergne, and the Count of Clermont, were in treaty with certain captains that held fortresses in the said countries against the French king. These said lords made such diligence, that they brought divers of the said captains to composition, and to the selling of their fortresses. Their treaty and composition was, that they should renounce the war between England and France; and, during the truce, they should go with the Count of Armagnac into Lombardy, or whither as he would lead them, to aid him in his war against the Lord Galeas, Count of Vertus, who had disherited his cousins-germain, children to his uncle the Lord Barnabo, as it hath been shewed here before. And so what to have their aid, and to avoid the country of these robbers and pyllers, (who had done so much hurt in the country, both to men and women,) the said Count of Armagnac, and the Count Dauphin, his cousin, took great pain in that matter. And at the instant requests and prayers of the good men of the cities and towns of the plain countries aforesaid, there was an toll gathered in Auvergne, Gaverdan, Rouergue, Cahorsin, and in Limosin, to the sum of two hundred thousand francs, so that poor and rich paid so much that divers sold and laid to pledge their

heritages, and were glad to do so to live at rest in their countries. And the good men thought, by reason of paying this money, and avoiding of the said five robbers and pyllers, that they should then have been quit for ever of them. But it proved not so in divers places; and especially of Aymergot Marcel and of his men.

For after that the castle of Aloys was yielded up and sold by Aymergot Marcel to the Count of Armagnac, which fortress stood in the heart of all Auvergne, this Aymergot was well worth in ready money a hundred thousand francs, which he had gotten by robbery and pillage, and by ransoming of men and merchandise of the country; and he had kept the rule more than ten years. The Count of Armagnac desired greatly to have in his company the said Aymergot Marcel; and thought not to leave him behind him, for two reasons: one was because he would gladly have the counsel and advice of him, for he was expert and subtil in all feats of arms, both in assaulting, scaling, and stealing of fortresses; the second reason was, the count feared that if this Aymergot should abide behind in the country, though he had sold to him the fortress of Aloys, and other fortresses, yet he might do much damage in the country of Auvergne and Rouergue. Wherefore the count made great labour to have him, but always Aymergot dissembled the matter, and said—"When I see the certainty of the Count of Armagnac's departing, then I know my own will is so good that I will not bide behind." And other answer the Count could not get of him.

The Count of Armagnac lay at Comminge and about Thoulouse in his country, and there made his

assembly; which voyage had been more hasted, an' it had not been for the voyage into Africk, that letted him a season. For divers knights and squires, that went in that voyage, had promised him; and this voyage into Barbary came so suddenly, that it hindered his voyage. When tidings were known in France of the treaties that the Count of Armagnac had made with the said captains in Auvergne, there was made as much haste as might be, to pay the money to the captains.

Aymergot Marcel was sore displeased with himself in that he had sold and delivered the strong castle of Aloys, for he saw his own authority thereby greatly lessened, and perceived well how he was the less feared. For all the season that he kept it he was doubted and feared, and honoured with all men of war of his part, and had kept a great state always in the castle of Aloys. The profit of the countries that he had held under subjection, was well worth, yearly, twenty thousand florins. When he remembered all this he was sorrowful; his treasure, he thought, he would not minish; he was wont daily to search for new pillages, whereby increased his profit; and then he saw that all was closed from him. Then he said and imagined, that to pyll and to rob (all things considered) was a good life, and so repented him of his good doing. On a time, he said to his old companions—"Sirs, there is no sport nor glory in this world among men of war, but to use such life as we have done in time past. What a joy it was to us when we rode forth at adventure, and sometime found by the way a rich prior or merchant, or a route of mules of Montpellier, of Narbonne, of Limoges, of Fougans, of Bezieres, of Thoulouse, or of Carcassone, laden with cloth of Brus-

sels; or peltre ware, coming from the fairs, or laden with spicery, from Bruges, from Damascus, or from Alexandria. [2] Whatsoever we met, all was ours; or else ransomed at our pleasure. Daily we got new money; and the villeins of Auvergne, and of Limosin, daily provided, and brought to our castle, wheat-meal, bread ready baked; oats for our horses, and litter; good wines; beeves and fat muttons; pullayne and wild fowl. We were ever furnished as though we had been kings. When we rode forth, all the country trembled for fear; all was ours, going or coming. How took we Carlaste, I and the Bourge of Compeigne, and I and Perot le Bernois took Chaluçet? How did we scale, with little aid, the strong castle of Marquel, pertaining to the Count Dauphin? I kept it not past five days; but I received for it, on a fair table, five thousand franks, and forgave one thousand for love of the Count Dauphin's children? By my faith, this was a fair and a good life, wherefore I repute myself sore deceived in that I have rendered up the fortress of Aloys: for it would have been kept from all the world; and the day that I gave it up, it was furnished with victuals to have been kept seven years without any re-victualling. This Count of Armagnac hath deceived me; Oliver Barbe and Perot le Bernois shewed me how I should repent myself. Certain I sore repent me of that I have done." [3]

And when such of his companions as had served him long heard him speak these words, they perceived well how he spake them with all his heart unfeigned.

Then they said to him—"Aymergot, we are all ready yet to serve you: let us renew again our war, and let us get some strong hold in Auvergne, or in

Limosin, and let us fortify it; and then, Sir, we shall soon recover our damages; we shall make a goodly flight in Auvergne and in Limosin, for as now the Count Dauphin, and Hugh, his brother, are out of the country; and divers other knights and squires in their company, in the voyage of Barbary, and specially the Lord of Coucy, who hath the sovereign regard, under the king, of all those marches; therefore we shall not need to fear him; nor the Duke of Berry, for he is at Paris; so thus we shall have now a good season."

"Well," quoth Aymergot, "I have good will thus to do, saving I am by name expressed in the charter of the truce."

"What of that, Sir?" quoth his company, "ye need not care therefore, if ye list; ye are not subject to the French king, ye owe him neither faith nor obeisance: ye are the king of England's man. [4] For your heritage (which is all destroyed and lost) lyeth in Limosin; and, Sir, we must live: and though we make war to live, the Englishmen will not be miscontent with us, and such as be in our case will draw to us; and, Sir, we have now good title to make war, for we be not now in Auvergne, where the covenant was made that we be bound unto. Let us send to the villeins of the villages when we be once in a strong hold, and command them to pay us trouage, or else to make upon them sore war."

"Well, Sirs," quoth Aymergot, "first let us provide for a strong place to abide in, and to draw unto when we need."

Some of them said—"Sir, we know where there is a strong hold, with a little new fortifying, pertaining to the heritage of the Lord De la Tour; no man

keepeth it; let us draw thither and fortify it, then we may, at our ease, run into Auvergne, and Limosin."

"Where lyeth this place?" quoth Aymergot.

"Sir," quoth they, "within a league of the Tower, and it is called the Roche de Vaudois."

"It is true," quoth Aymergot, "I know it well: it is a meet place for us; let us go thither and fortify it."

Thus on this purpose they concluded; and on a day assembled together and went to the Roche de Vaudois. Then Aymergot viewed the place, to see if it were worth the fortifying thereof; and, when he had well viewed the situation thereof, and the defences that might be made there, it pleased him right well. Thus they took it and fortified it, little and little, ere they began to do any displeasure in the country: and when they saw the place strong to resist against siege or assault, and that they were well horsed, and well provided of all things necessary for their defence,—then they began to ride abroad in the country, and took prisoners, and ransomed them; and provided their hold with flesh, meat, wax, wine, salt, iron, and steel, and of all other necessaries. There came nothing amiss to them without it was too heavy, or too hot. The country all about, and the people who hoped to have been in rest and peace, by reason of the truce, made between the two kings and their realms, began then to be sore abashed. For these robbers and pyllers took them in their houses, and wheresoever they found them, in the fields labouring. And they called themselves Adventurers. [5]

CAP. II.

OF THE ORDER WHICH THEY OF AUVERGNE TOOK TO GUARD AGAINST AYMERGOT MARCEL.

Now when the lord de la Tour knew that he had such neighbours so near him, he was not well assured of himself, but fortified and made good watch in all his towns and castles. The Countess of Dauphiny, a right valiant lady, and of great prudence, being with her children in a good tower and strong castle of hers, called Sardes, was not well assured of herself, when she heard that Aymergot and his company had fortified the rock of Vaudois. She sent incontinent to all her castles, and furnished them with men of war; and also she sent the tidings into other places, to the intent that they should not be surprised; for she greatly doubted this Aymergot, because he had of her before at one payment five thousand florins. Surely, all the country of Auvergne and Limosin began greatly to be afraid. Then the knights and squires, and men of the good towns, as of Clermont, of Montferaut, and of Ryon, determined to send to the French king, and so they did.

In the mean time, while the said Countess, and the other good men of the country, did send to the French king, and to the Duke of Berry, who as then were at Paris. Aymergot and his company fortified greatly

the Roche de Vaudois; and made a lodging for their horses. When all other adventurers who were discharged out of wages, heard how Aymergot made war again, they were right joyful thereof, and many came to him. Anon, he had more of these robbers and pyllers than he would have. They demanded no wages of him, but all only that they might be of his band; for all such as might be of his company, they knew well they should lightly win somewhat, for they were abandoned to rob and to pyll. Thus they rode up and down, and made themselves to be known in divers places. There was no speaking in Limosin and Auvergne, but of them of Roche de Vaudois. The country was sore afraid. They of Chaluçet (whereof Perot le Bernois was captain) held and kept firmly the truce that was made; and when he saw that Aymergot Marcel overran so the country, he was sore displeased with him, and said how he did evil; and sent him word that he nor none of his should come into Chaluçet, nor into none other place where he had any rule. Aymergot cared nothing for that, for he had places enough to draw unto; beside that he had men enough, and daily increased, for such as were minded to do evil drew to him daily. Perot le Bernois charged such as were under his rule, on pain of their lives, that none should ride out to do any damage to his neighbours, for he said he would surely keep the truce. Oliver Barbe, captain of Douzac, dissimuled the matter, saying how he would keep the truce; howbeit, as it was shewed me, some of his men would some time ride forth secretly, and what they won he would have the profit thereof.

Now the men of the countries of Clermont, of Montferaut, and of Ryon, who were gone in message to the

French king, and to the Duke of Berry, sped so in their journies that they came to Paris, and there found the king, the Duke of Berry, the Duke of Touraine, and the constable of France, Sir Oliver de Clisson. They came first to the Duke of Berry and to his council, and shewed the cause of their coming, how Aymergot Marcel made war, and destroyed the country of Auvergne, and how the evil people daily multiplied, wherefore they desired for God's sake to have some remedy; saying, "If these evil people should long continue, they would destroy the country of Auvergne and the frontiers of Limosin."

When these tidings came to the king and to the Duke of Berry, they were sore displeased; for they had thought all had been in peace by reason of the truce. Then the king demanded if they of the garrison of Chaluçet and Douzac did any evil or not? They answered and said, they complained of no man, but only of Aymergot Marcel, and of his company, who had fortified the Roche de Vaudois. Then the king and the Duke of Berry answered and said, "Sirs, ye good people take good heed to yourselves, and we shall provide shortly a remedy that ye shall well perceive. Return to your places, and shew this answer to them that sent you hither." These good men of Auvergne were well content with their answer, and tarried there two days, and then returned and took their leave, specially of the Duke of Berry; and so departed.

The French king and his council forgot not these tidings, nor the Duke of Berry, whom the matter touched greatly, because he held great heritages in Auvergne, therefore he advanced the business. Ye have heard here before, how the Lord of Coucy was

ordained by the King and his council to be captain, and to have the sovereign rule of all the country from the sea by Rochelle, unto the river of Dordogne, and to Bourdeaux, on the river of Garonne. As then, the Lord of Coucy was not in the country, he was going in the voyage to Barbary with other Lords of France, and of other countries. Howbeit, at his departing, he ordained his cousin Sir Robert of Bethune, Viscount of Meaux, to be his lieutenant in the said country. Then the king said how it was most meetest that the Viscount of Meaux should have the charge of that voyage to go into Languedoc rather than any other person. He was at Condé, on the river of Marne. The king wrote to him. The messenger found him with his wife at Condé, and there he delivered his letters from the French king. The viscount received them, and when he knew what they meant, he said he would obey the king's commandment. He prepared himself as soon as he might, and departed from Condé, and rode so long that he came to Paris, where he found the king and his council, who said unto him, "Viscount, make you ready, assemble the men of war of your retinue, for ye must go into Auvergne There be of these pyllers and robbers, of whom Aymergot Marcel is chief, as we be informed, who destroy and sore trouble the good people there. Do ye so much as to drive them out of that country; and if ye may entrap the said Aymergot, bring him to us, and we shall have great joy thereof. It is ordained that there shall be delivered to you such sums of money, at Clermont, that shall suffice for your men of war; and to go from hence thither, speak to our treasurers, and they shall deliver you for your expenses. Make haste, for it requireth diligence!"

The viscount answered how he was ready, and so went to his lodging, and there he wrote letters to knights and squires in France and Picardy, of his acquaintance and retinue, that they in all haste should meet with him at Chartres, and there to make their musters. Such as he wrote unto obeyed. They loved the viscount, for they held him for a good captain. So they came to the city of Chartres at the day prefixed. There assembled a two hundred spears of good men of war. When they were assembled, they departed from Chartres, and took the way towards Auvergne, and so came into Bourbonnais. Tidings came into Auvergne how succours were coming to them out of France, whereof all the country was rejoiced.

It was needful that these men of war came thither so soon as they did, for if they had tarried but six days longer, Aymergot Marcel and his band had thought to have over-run the plain country between Clermont and Montferant; and about Ryon to Gaunat. And if they had made that voyage, they had done great damage to the country, more to the value than a hundred thousand francs;—for in those marches lay the riches of Auvergne, and no man could have resisted them; for the country as then was void of any man of war: And also the bruit was that Aymergot Marcel's company was far more in number than they were indeed. Aymergot was ready to have made this journey; but tidings came to him, however it was, by pilgrims or by spies, that the Viscount of Meaux, with a great company, was coming against him to make him war, and to put him out of his fortress of the Roche de Vaudois. These news letted his enterprise, and he kept himself within his hold, and thought he should be besieged. Then Aymergot Marcel

began to doubt, and repented him of that he had done, for he knew well if that he were taken, there should no ransom go for him. Then he said to some of his company, "I am shamed. I have believed evil counsel. Covetousness shall destroy me, without I have comfort." Then they said to him, "Sir, why doubt ye thus. We have seen you the hardiest man of arms of all these marches. We have a good garrison, and well provided, and we are men of defence, and love as well to defend our bodies as ye do to defend yours. Ye can lose nothing, but we must lose also. If by adventure ye be taken, ye shall make your finance according to reason. Ye have good enough, and we have nothing. If we be taken, it lyeth on our heads; we get none other remission; we shall sell our lives dear. Let us defend ourselves as well as we can. Be not abashed at any thing that we hear or see. We think we shall not need to care for any siege: let us war wisely." Thus these companions comforted Aymergot Marcel.

CAP. III.

OF THE PROGRESS OF THE VISCOUNT OF MEAUX TO BESIEGE THE ROCHE DE VAUDOIS.

THE Viscount of Meaux, and his company, came forward till they came to Moulins in Bourbonais: there the Duchess of Bourbon, daughter to the Count Dauphin, received the viscount and his knights right honourably, and made them to dine; then they passed forth, and lay that night at Saint Pursaut, and from thence to Gaunat, and so to Aigue-perses, and then to Ryon, and from thence to Clermont, where they were well received with the bishop, and with them of the town. There the men of war had money, for there was a taille gathered, and delivered at Clermont; then they passed forth, and came to our Lady of Dorcivall, a four leagues from the Roche de Vaudois. There the viscount rested, and sent for the knights and squires of Auvergne and of Limosin; there they assembled. There were then to the number of four hundred spears, one and the other, and about a hundred cross-bows of Genoa. There was with the Viscount of Meaux, the Lord of Montague, from the Vermandois, and his brother, the Lord of Dommart, and Sir Bernard de la Rivière; Sir William Butler, the Lord of Dôme, the Lord de la Roche; the Lord de la Tour; Sir Louis Dambyer, the Lord of Saint

Ampysse, and Sir Robert Dolphin, and divers other; and captains of the Genoese were two valiant squires, the one named Aubert of Nespynolle and Callyance; and as the chief steward with the Viscount of Meaux, was a gentle squire, called Louis of Lesglynell: these Genoese cross-bows were armed at all pieces, else they should not have passed wages with the viscount.

When Aymergot Marcel, and Guyot du Sall his uncle, understood that these men of war of France, of Picardy, of Auvergne, and Genoa, were come to our Lady of Dorcivall, and were minded to come and lay siege to their hold of Roche de Vaudois, then they advised what was best for them to do to make defence. First, they considered well that it was not for them to keep any horse, seeing they should be besieged. Not far off from the Roche de Vaudois, there was another strong hold, called Souperge, under the rule of Aymergot Marcel; and there was his wife, and thither he sent all his pages and horses, and the most part of all his riches. This Roche de Vaudois was well fortified, and it stood in a strong ground. The Lord de la Tour was sore blamed of them of the country that he had left that place unfortified and unprovided; and it was commonly said in Auvergne that they might thank the Lord de la Tour for all the damage they had taken, because he might well have kept the Roche de Vaudois; or if he would not have kept it, for cost, he might have delivered it to the men of the country, that they might have razed it in such wise that it should not have been tenable: but he left the walls whole and entire as he found them. This Rock of Vaudois is set among high mountains; and that rock standeth apart, and on the one side the walls be of a rock; and

they had so fortified it that it could not be assailed but on the fore part by skirmishing.

The Viscount of Meaux departed from our Lady of Dorcivall, with knights and squires, and Genoese cross-bows, and so came before the Roche de Vaudois; there, like good men of war, they laid their siege, and little amended their lodgings.

When the Countess of Dauphiny, being at Sardes, knew the true tidings that the Roche de Vaudois was besieged, she was right joyful; and because that she thought that the Viscount of Meaux was come so far as out of France and Picardy, that he had brought with him no tents or pavilions, she ordained for him two fair and good tents, pertaining to the Count Dauphin, and sent them to the Viscount, by manner of lending of them to him during the siege. The viscount took the present in good part, and recommended himself heartily to the countess, thanking her for the tents she had sent him, for they should do him good service. The Lord de la Tour was in his own country, and was within a mile of a castle of his own, so that he lacked nothing. Other knights and squires made provision as well as they might. They had victuals plenty, from all quarters, at a reasonable price; the season was fair, dry, and hot, as in the month of August. The knights and other companions refreshed themselves under the green boughs.

Then tidings came into the host that did put the lords and their companions in doubt. It was shewed them that the garrisons of their enemies, as of Chaluçet and of Douzac, assembled together, and were determined in a morning to awake the host ere they were aware, and to raise the siege. Then the Viscount of Meaux and his knights took counsel together, and determined to send

a herald to Perot le Bernois, captain of Chaluçet, and to Oliver Barbe, captain of Douzac, to know their minds, to the intent that they were not surprised, but that they might be assured of the English garrisons; and, according as they had answer again, thereafter to provide for themselves. They sent an herald, and instructed him what he should do and say. The herald departed from the host and rode to Chaluçet, and there, by adventure, found Perot at the barriers, with many of his company, who were there sporting and casting the stone. Then the messenger alighted from his horse, and demanded for the captain: he was brought to him, and when he came before him, he did his message from point to point.

Then Perot le Bernois said, "Herald, say to your masters that we will hold and keep as firmly and truly the truce that is taken between England and France, in like manner as we would they should keep with us; and if we know any of ours that will break or violate the peace by any manner of incident, if we may take them, we shall do such correction as appertaineth to be done, as we have promised. And we will that ye say to your masters, that what Aymergot hath done was without our counsel, for he never shewed us of his purpose. We did charge him, and all his, that he should not meddle without Seignorie; if he did he should have an evil end."

The herald was had into the fortress, and there dined. Then he took leave, and there was given him ten francs. Then he departed, and demanded the way to Douzac, and found there Oliver Barbe, captain of that fortress. The herald spake to him in like manner as he had done to Perot le Bernois. Oliver Barbe answered, "that in nowise he would break the truce,

because he would not be dishonoured;" and therewith gave him ten francs; and then he departed, and returned to his master before the Roche de Vaudois.

Then the knights were sore desirous to hear tidings; they drew about the viscount. There the herald shewed how he had been at Chaluçet and Douzac, and what answer he had of the captains. Then the viscount praised much Perot le Bernois and Oliver Barbe, and was as then out of doubt, and so continued their siege.

The siege being before the Roche de Vaudois, every day there was skirmishing, and oftentimes some hurt with shot of the Genoese cross-bows, for the Genoese were good shooters. Thus the siege continued nine weeks. The enterprise of the garrison was greatly to the advantage of them within. I shall shew you the manner how.

At certain places they might issue out at their pleasure in despite of all their enemies, for an they should have kept them from their issues, they had need to have had more than six thousand men.

Thus, during the siege, Aymergot was right imaginative, and considered all things, and saw how that he had not done well; but to turn his deed in good manner, and to the intent that the Roche de Vaudois should still remain with him, he sent into England a varlet of his, with letters of credence to the king of England, and to the Duke of Lancaster. And of this purpose he brake his mind to an uncle of his, called Guyot du Sall, a man of a threescore year of age, who had greatly used deeds of arms, and knew much of the world. When Aymergot had shewed him the manner how he would send into England, this Guyot was well agreed thereto; and said how to send a wise man

thither could do no hurt. Then they sent a varlet who had been brought up among them. Aymergot instructed him, and said: "We shall set thee out of this house in safeguard, out of all peril, and thou shalt have gold and silver enough. Thou shalt go into England with these letters, one to the king, another to the Duke of Lancaster, and the third to the king's council; all these letters are of credence. Then they will demand of thee the occasion of thy coming thither; and after thou hast made thy recommendation, thou shalt say, that Aymergot Marcel, their poor soldier and subject, and ready with good will to do them service, is enclosed and besieged in a little fortress pertaining to the fealty of Limosin, belonging to the king of England's heritage; and they that lie at the siege travail and take great pain daily to win us that do defend the fortress: and the captain of them without is a lord, cousin to the Lord of Coucy, called Sir Robert, Viscount of Meaux, set there by the French king. Therefore desire the king and his council, and especially the Duke of Lancaster, who hath the sovereign governance in Bourdelais, and of the king of England's heritage in these parts, that it would please them to write, and to command the Viscount of Meaux to depart from the siege, and to raise his army, and to write to the viscount that he is about to break the peace that was taken at Balyngham, between Boulogne and Calais. And, because I am in doubt what answer the Viscount will make to these letters, (for he is somewhat strong and froward,) therefore desire that I may have in likewise letters from the king and his council, and from the Duke of Lancaster to the Duke of Berry; for, if the Duke of Berry will, incontinent the siege shall be raised; and for the more surety, desire

to have with ye some knight of honour of the king's house, or of the Duke of Lancaster's, such one as the Duke of Berry knoweth, and the other lords of France; and shew him from me that I shall give him a hundred francs. Remember all these words, and do thy message accordingly; and shew them that ye speak withal, that this little fortress that I have fortified, if it may abide still English, it shall come well to point, and specially to them that will make war in these parts for the king of England: for the fortress standeth on the frontiers of the country, for thereby may be won at a season in Auvergne and Limosin two thousand francs."

CAP. IV.

OF THE JOURNEY OF AYMERGOT'S VARLET TO LONDON; AND HOW HE SPED IN HIS MESSAGE.

WHEN Aymergot Marcel and Guyot du Sall his uncle had well instructed this varlet, and that the letters of credence were written, and sealed, and delivered, the varlet departed by night, and was well accompanied and conveyed a-foot to another fortress pertaining to Aymergot, called Saint Loupery; there he took a horse, such as he would choose, for he had a great journey to ride. He rode forth through the realm of France, like a Frenchman of Auvergne; and so came to Calais, and acquainted himself with the captain Sir John Beauchamp, and shewed him part of his business, to the intent to have the sooner passage, as he had. So he came to Dover, and then took his journey to London; and it was his fortune that the king of England and his two uncles, and the Duke of Lancaster, and the king's council, were at the same time at the palace of Westminster in counselling for matters of Northumberland; for the Scots held not well the truce, as complaints were made*. The same time Aymergot's varlet came to London, and there took his lodg-

* See Story of the Battle of Otterbourne.

ing, and shewed his host part of the cause of his coming. His host brought him to Westminster, and caused him first to speak with the Duke of Lancaster, who was in his chamber; it was before he went to the council; there the varlet delivered him his letters. The duke took and read them: then he drew him apart, and demanded what credence he had. Then the varlet shewed him all the whole matter, as ye have heard before. The duke heard him well, and demanded if he had any more letters; and he said, "that he had letters to the king and to his council." "That is well," quoth the duke; "I shall cause thee to have audience." Then the duke went to the council, and when he saw the hour and time, he moved the varlet's matter; and by the duke's advancement the varlet was sent for. Then he delivered to the king and to his council the letters. They were opened and read; and then he was demanded what was his credence; and the varlet, who was hardy and not abashed, shewed the business of Aymergot Marcel right sagely, and was the better assured because every man gave him good audience. When he had said as much as he would, then he was answered that the king would take counsel in the matter, and make an answer. Then he went out of the council-chamber, and tarried till he had an answer.

The answer was, that the king would write to the Viscount of Meaux, and also to the Duke of Berry, according as Aymergot had required, and in likewise so promised the Duke of Lancaster. And when the letters were written, there was a gentleman of the Duke of Lancaster's appointed to bear these letters; so they passed the sea, and with them went Derby, an herald, the better to further the matter, because he was ac-

quainted with the Lords of Auvergne, and specially with the Duke of Berry. The gentleman of the Duke of Lancaster's, named Cherbury, went with the better will, because the varlet promised him, in the behalf of Aymergot, a hundred francs. Thus they three departed and came to Dover, and from thence at a tide to Calais; and when their horses were unshipped, they took the way to Boulogne, and so through Picardy, and went to Paris, and from thence into Auvergne; and when they approached near to Limosin and to the country where the Roche de Vandois was set, they rode about the country the more secretly to come thither.

Thus, as I have shewed you, these messengers did so much that they came near to the Roche de Vaudois. When they were near where the siege lay, the squire and the herald thought it for the best not to enter into the town at that present time, but they sent the varlet into the town, saying they would do well enough without his company; for they said if he should be seen with them, they at the siege would suppose that he had been sent into England for them.

The varlet obeyed; and in the night he entered into the town without danger. Then Aymergot Marcel and Guyot du Sall made him good cheer, and had marvel that he had sped his journey in so short a space. Then he shewed how he had sped, and how a squire of the Duke of Lancaster's and a herald were come with him with letters from the king and from the Duke of Lancaster, both to the Viscount of Meaux and to the Duke of Berry, if need were. "And why," quoth Aymergot Marcel, "are they not come hither into this castle?"

"Sir," quoth the varlet, "they say they two would do their message well enough, nor they would have no man seen in their company that should come from you."

"They are the wiser," quoth Guyot du Sall, "thereby it shall seem that the matter toucheth the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster."

"Sir, it is true," quoth the varlet.

Of these tidings Aymergot was joyful, and said to the varlet, "Thou hast well and diligently sped thy matters, and in a short season I shall well reward thee for thy labour."

Thus the squire and the herald came straight to the siege, and demanded for the Viscount's lodging; they were brought thither, and there they found the Viscount beholding men casting the stone. Then they kneeled and saluted him, and he them again, and demanded from whence they came: they answered and said, "How they came out of England, sent thither by their king and by the Duke of Lancaster." "Ye are welcome," quoth the Viscount; "What matter hath brought you into this wild country?"

"Sir," quoth the herald, "behold here this squire of the Duke of Lancaster's, who hath brought to you letters from the King of England and from the Duke of Lancaster, if it please you to read them; and because I somewhat knew the country, I am come in his company."

Then the squire delivered his letters, and the Viscount received them, and beheld the seals, and knew well they came out of England. Then he took one apart that could read, and there he read the letters from point to point two or three times, till he knew well

what they meant. [6] Then he studied and regarded well the king of England's writing, who said in his writing that he had marvel, that he would lodge, sleep, and rest him with an army of men of war in his heritage; and that he doeth daily all that he can to break the peace, which he ought in nowise to do, for it is greatly prejudicial to them that have set their seals to the confirmation of the peace; and the conclusion of the letter was, how the king commanded them incontinent, after the sight of his letters, that he and his company should depart and raise their siege, and suffer Aymergot Marcel peaceably to enjoy the house pertaining to his heritage, which had cost him great goods the fortifying.

These words and such other were inclosed in these letters, all to the aid of Aymergot Marcel. In like manner as the king's letters spake, the Duke of Lancaster sang the same note, commanding like the excellent Duke of Aquitaine and all of that duchy; and when the Viscount of Meaux had well advised himself, he said, "Fair Sirs, these tidings that ye have brought requireth counsel and advice. I shall take counsel, and then ye shall be answered."

Then they were made to drink of the viscount's wine; and in the mean time the viscount took counsel, for he sent for the Lord de la Tour, and for Sir William Butler, Sir Robert Dalphin, Sir Louis Dambyer, and also for the Lord Montagu, and for Sir Barat de la Rivière, who was of his house. And when they were all together, he renewed the words, and shewed them the cause why he had sent for them, and there caused the letters to be read before them. When these lords heard that, they had great marvel

how these letters could be brought out of England, for as then they had not laid at the siege past a month. "I shall shew you," quoth the viscount, "what I suppose. Aymergot Marcel is a subtle man; as soon as he saw that he should be besieged, I think he sent incontinent some messenger into England to attain those letters, the which I may obey if I list; but I shall answer them shortly; but as in that the king of England and the Duke of Lancaster command me to do, I will nothing obey their commandments, for I am not bound to obey them, but only the French king, by whose commandment I am sent hither. Call forth the squire and the herald; I shall make them their answer." They were brought forth, and the viscount began to speak as followeth:—

"You, Derby, and Tomelyn Cherbury, thus ye be named according to the tenor of your letters;—and as it appeareth to me ye be sent hither by the King of England and from the Duke of Lancaster. They are informed, I cannot tell how, either by Aymergot Marcel or by some other that would aid him, and hath been in England in his name, how I am at this present time with an army of men of war lodged on the heritage of the King of England's; and they command me to depart and raise my siege, and to suffer Aymergot Marcel peaceably to enjoy this little fortress, which has cost so much the fortifying; and also they send me word how I do put myself in peril of dishonouring, in that I should consent to break the peace sealed and confirmed to endure three years between the two kings and their allies. Fair Sirs, I say unto you that I will do nothing that shall be against the charter of peace: I will keep the truce, and do

nothing against it; and though I am lodged here, it breaketh no peace nor truce: I am subject to the French king, who hath sent me hither, and hath admitted me as his marshal of this small army; for it came to the knowledge of the king, my master, and his counsel, by grievous complaints of the noblemen and other of the country of Auvergne and Limosin, how they had taken great damages and losses, by the means that Aymergot advised a strong place between the countries which was void and not inhabited; he took and fortified it, and hath not made it a house of peace or solace, but a strong fortress, and a resorting place for thieves, robbers, and murderers; whereupon I am commanded to be here to defend the country; and to the intent that such as be assembled in this fortress should not multiply in their wickedness, but to punish them by such sentence as appertaineth to their trespass, and for that intent I do put to my pain to take them if I can; the which commandment of my master I will obey, and shall do my endeavour to acquit me truly: and from hence I will not depart whatsoever commandment I have till I have the fortress and them that be within; and if Aymergot Marcel will say that I am advanced to break the peace let him come forth, and he shall be fought withal, with one that is better than he, and shall cause to be proved by divers points and articles that he himself breaketh the peace. Sirs, all things considered, I make you this answer: ye may return when it please you; and when ye come there as ye would be, say none otherwise nor no less than I have said to you; for oftentimes reports not truly set inform lords otherwise than the truth is indeed."

"Sir," quoth the squire, "we are come hither for none other purpose but to report the truth of that we hear and see; and since ye will none otherwise do, we need no longer to abide here," and so they took their leave; and there was given to the herald ten francs for the honour of the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster.

CAP. V.

OF THE FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OF THE MESSENGERS OF THE KING OF ENGLAND.

When they were departed, they took the high-way to Clermont, and said they would again to Paris; and when they were half a league on their way then they began to enter into their matter, and said, "As yet we have done nothing; it behoveth us to go to the Duke of Berry into Auvergne, who is lord of this country, for he writeth himself Duke of Berry and of Auvergne. The Viscount of Meaux dare not displease the duke if he command him to depart; and we have letters from the King of England, our master, and from the Duke of Lancaster, to him; wherefore it is reason that we deliver them, and that we may know his intent." They concluded on that purpose, and so rode to Clermont; thither they were welcome, for the herald knew the country; and when they were demanded what they were, they answered, "that they were messengers sent from the King of England." And then they demanded where the Duke of Berry was, and it was shewed them that the duke and the duchess were in a castle of theirs, named the Nonect. The herald knew it well; he had been there before. Then they departed from Clermont and rode to

Vyore, and from thence to Noneet. There is a high mountain to pass ere one come to the castle; when they came there, the Duke of Berry, with many other, was sporting without the gate. The herald was known by divers; then they were brought to the duke, who, for the love of the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster, made them good cheer. The squire delivered his letters to the duke, who received them, and opened and read them at length two times over; then he studied a little, and answered them courteously, and said, "Sirs, for the love of our cousins of England, we shall gladly do our power." Of the which answer the squire and the herald were right joyous, and thought then how they had sped all their matter; but it was not so, as ye shall hear hereafter.

Howbeit, the Duke of Berry, at the beginning, did his endeavour to have raised the siege, to please thereby the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster, who desired that the siege might be raised before the Roche de Vaudois, and that the little fortress might abide still to Aymergot Marcel; and if he had done any thing to displease the French king or his council, the King of England would see that there should be amends made. And the Duke of Berry, because he would acquit him truly to the Englishmen's desires, such as were in his house, wrote, incontinent, letters well indited to the Viscount of Meaux; and these letters were read, ere they were sealed, before the Englishmen, who thought them well ordained. These letters were sent by a notable squire of the Duke of Berry's to the Viscount of Meaux, who received them and opened them. Then the viscount caused them to be read before such lords as were there with him while the messenger was drinking, for they made him

good cheer for the love of the Duke of Berry, as was reason. "Sirs," quoth the viscount, "we shall not be in rest since the Duke of Berry will bear Aymergot, who is the man of the world that this twelve year hath most grieved and travailed the country of Auvergne. I had thought that the duke had hated him greatly, but it seemeth nay; since he hath expressly commanded that I should depart from hence; but, by my faith, at this time I will not obey this letter, but I will make excuse by reason of the king and his council who sent me hither; and at my departing from Paris he straitly commanded me that for any commandment from any person if it were not from the king himself, that I should not depart from hence till I had taken the strong hold of the Rock of Vaudois and Aymergot therein, which I will do if I can. And now the Duke of Berry commandeth me to the contrary, for he chargeth me incontinent, his letters seen, that I should raise the siege. By my faith I will not do it."

"Sir," quoth they that were about him, "ye speak royally and truly; and we shall abide with you. But we suppose the occasion that the Duke of Berry writeth thus for Aymergot is, that the English squire and the herald hath thus desired him to write. We think also they have brought letters to him from the King of England and from the Duke of Lancaster, as they brought to you this other day."

"Ye say well," quoth the viscount, "and I shall know it if I can."

Then the Duke of Berry's squire was sent for to have his answer, and the viscount said to him, "Pierre, I will well that ye know that I owe obeisance to the Duke of Berry, for he is so near a kin to the king that I dare not displease him: but I and my compa-

nions, who have been here these five weeks at this siege to win this fortress, and to take the thieves that be within it, are here by the straight commandment of the king and his council; and we have great marvel (and good cause why) how my Lord of Berry doth command us, and maketh request for his enemies that we should raise our siege. By reason of that, we say generally, that we shall give example to all thieves and robbers, such as will over-run the realm, to do the worst they can; wherefore, Pierre, ye shall say to the Duke of Berry from us all, that we are, and shall be, ready inclined to do any thing that he commandeth us to do; but, as in this case, I am so straightly enjoined and commanded by the king and his council to keep this siege, and to continue it till I have the fortress and them within at my pleasure, that this commandment I dare not break; and say, that surely I will obey no commandment but only the king's, whose subject I am, and by whom I am sent hither. But, Sir, I require you to shew one thing if ye can: Who hath made this request for Aymergot Marcel, who hath done so much evil and annoyance to the country of Auvergne and Limosin?—and now he is entrapped, like as a traitor should be, and is near come to an evil end, which he hath well deserved, for he hath erred and done contrary to his oath?"

"Sir," quoth the squire, "there came to my lord the Duke of Berry, two men of England, an herald and another, who brought letters to my lord from the King of England, and from the Duke of Lancaster, and they made great request for Aymergot."

"I believe you well," quoth the viscount, "it was Derby the herald, and a squire called Cherbury; they brought me this other day like letters; wherefore

I suppose that the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster wrote to the Duke of Berry in this matter, wherefore shew to my Lord of Berry that I desire him to consider all things well, for all these requests that are come from the other side of the sea are but desires purchased by our enemies, to the which no lord on this side the sea (if he love the honour and profit of the realm of France) should incline or condescend."

"Sir," quoth the squire, "I shall forget nothing of that ye have shewed me, for I love not Aymergot; I had rather see his punishment than his deliverance."

So the squire departed and rode to Noneet; there he found the Duke of Berry, and did his message right sagely. The conclusion was, that the Viscount of Meaux said that surely he would not depart from the siege against the Roche de Vaudois without the king sent him straight commandment so to do. With this answer the Duke of Berry was not well content; he thought that his commandment should have been obeyed, especially in Auvergne.

When the English squire, and Derby the herald, heard of the answer that was made to the Duke of Berry, and how that the siege was not raised, they were sorry, and saw well they travelled in vain. Then they said to the duke, "Sir, what will ye counsel us to do? Shall we thus depart from you without speeding of any thing to purpose? The King of England and the Duke of Lancaster have great trust and affiance in you, that ye should cause this siege to be raised, because the Roche de Vaudois is under your seignory."

"Sirs," quoth the duke, "suffer a season; Aymer-

got Marcel is in a strong place, he needeth not to fear taking, without a great unhap; and shortly I purpose to go into France to the king, and then I will speak with the king and his council; and for the love of my cousins of England I shall do the best I can to bring the matter to pass, and ye shall go with me and see how I shall speed."

With those words the squire and the herald were content. Then, the fourth day after, the duke departed from Nonect, and left there the duchess, his wife, with a great part of his household; and so the duke rode to Ryon, in Auvergne; and there he tarried more than eight days for the Count of Sauveterre and the Lord de Rouel, who were gone to Avignon about the duke's business. And when they were come, they departed from Ryon altogether, and took the way through Bourbonais, and at last came to Bourges in Berry, and there tarried two days. Then he rode to Mehun on the river of Yèvre, to a castle, one of the fairest houses in the world; as then the duke had newly built it, and it had cost him three hundred thousand francs. There the duke tarried fifteen days, wherewith the English messengers were sore troubled, howbeit they could find none other remedy. The duke, as then, made little force for the deliverance of Aymergot: I shall shew you how and by what means. So it was; the Count of St. Cyr, and the Lord de Rouel, who were chief of the duke's council, with Sir Peter Messin, in fair manner, blamed the duke and said, how he had nothing to do to meddle with the business of Aymergot, saying that his life hath been always dishonourable; and how that he was a false parlyate, and always against the crown of France, and had done many villanous deeds and robberies in

Auvergne and in Limosin, and how that he was no meet person to be entreated for; "wherefore, Sir," quoth they, "suffer the king and his council to deal with him as they list. These words and such other refrained the Duke of Berry to speak any further in the matter; howbeit, the two Englishmen did their best to remind the duke, and the duke dissembling, answered them courteously, and said, "Sirs, suffer a season: we shall shortly be at Paris." But, for all his words, he tarried still at Melun more than three weeks, devising with his master-workmen, as carvers and painters, for therein he had great fancy: he had a master-workman called Master Andrew, as then one of the best workmen in the world; an Englishman born, but he dwelt in France and in Hainault a long season.

CAP. VI.

OF WHAT FORTUNED AT THE ROCHE DE VAUDOIS.

Now shall I shew you what fortuned of Aymergot Marcel and of the Roche de Vaudois. This Aymergot was a far-casting man; and when he saw that the siege was not raised, he thought well that the King of England's messengers could not speed of their suit. Then he thought on another turn; as to depart thence, and to ride night and day to speak with the captains of Perigord and Gascony—Guyot of St. Foi, and Ernalton of St. Colomb, and Ernalton of Rostem; John of Marsan, Pierre Danchin, and Remonel of Çompayne; and with divers other Gascons and Biernois, in the English garrisons. And he thought that with his fair words he should cause them to assemble together, and to come into Auvergne on trust to win great booties; and so on a morning, or in the night, to come and raise the siege before Vaudois, and to take there the Frenchmen prisoners, which should be worth to them a hundred thousand francs, besides other booties. Then he shewed his uncle Guyot de Sall all his purpose; who answered him and said, "Sir, I see in this nothing but good, for otherwise we cannot be delivered from these Frenchmen."

"Well, uncle," quoth Aymergot, "I shall do this

message myself, since ye counsel me thereto; but I shall desire of you one thing ere I depart."

"What is that?" quoth he.

"It is this;" said Aymergot, "that whatsoever skirmish the Frenchmen make, you in no wise issue out of the gates, nor open not the barriers, for an' ye do, ye may rather lose than win."

"Sir," quoth Guyot, "I shall be ware enough thereof: we shall keep ourselves close here within till your return, or that we hear tidings of you."

"Well, fair uncle, I require you so to do, for they cannot displease us none other ways: as for their assaults, or skirmishes, ye need not fear, so ye keep yourselves close within."

Thus within three days after, Aymergot departed from the Roche de Vaudois, only accompanied with a page. He passed forth without danger of the Frenchmen. His intention was to bring thither Companions Adventurers, to raise the siege. Many of them that were within the house knew nothing of his departure; for he might depart when he list without knowledge.

Every day there was a skirmishing and assaults at the barriers, and within a five or six days after the departure of Aymergot, there was a great assault made by the Frenchmen, in three parts. This Guyot de Sall was a good man of arms, and long time had used the exercising thereof; howbeit, on that day, he fortuned evil by reason of a little pride, for he brake the ordinance that his cousin Aymergot had set, ere he departed; for he had charged him that for any manner of assault he should not issue out of the barriers. At this assault, there were three squires of the French party, two of Auvergne and one of Brittany, who were skirmishing valiantly upon a pan of a wall near to the

fortress. These three squires, above all other, that day did most valiantly. They, of Auvergne, were called Richard de Violette, and Lubrinot of Rochefort; and the Breton was named Monadyke, who was taken, before, in Limosin, in the castle of Vauchador, and was pertaining to Sir William Butler. The assault endured till night. These three squires achieved there great laud and praise; but for all their travail and pain they won nothing.

Then, at another assault, the Viscount of Meaux made a bushment of twelve men at arms and their companions, and laid them in an old house without the fortress, and commanded another set, to go and skirmish at the barriers, saying, "I think surely we shall see them within issue out, for they are covetous to win. If they do so, then withdraw yourselves, little and little, till they be past our bushment; then they shall break out, and also return you again; thus they shall be enclosed, and taken or slain. This is the best way that I can see for our advantage."

Thus, as the viscount had devised and ordained, it was done. They were named as should lie in the bushment, to the number of twelve; they laid themselves in an old house without the fortress; and another sort went and skirmished at the barriers, as Lubrinot of Rochefort, Richard of Violette, and the Monadyke, with other: they were freshly armed and apparelled, to the intent that they within should have the more courage to issue out to them. They were also twelve only.

When they came to the barriers they began to skirmish but faintly, and like such persons as had but little skill of feats of arms; wherefore Guyot du Sall made little force of them, but issued out, and said to

his companions: "By Saint Marcel we will issue out, for at the barriers be a sort of young companions; by that they shew, they know but little of deeds of arms, but we shall teach them to know it: they shall be all our prisoners; they cannot escape us." Therewith they opened the barrier, and issued out; first, Guyot du Sall, and remembered nothing the charge that Aymergot had given him at his departing; for the great desire that he had to do deeds of arms, and to win somewhat, made him to begin the skirmish.

When the Frenchmen saw that Guyot du Sall and his company were come out of their barriers, they were right joyful; then they began to draw back, little and little, and they of the fortress pursued them; and they went so far that they passed the bushment; and when they saw their time, they broke out of their bushment between them and their fortress, crying, "Coucy!—the Viscount!" Thus they of the fortress were enclosed both before and behind. When Guyot saw that, he knew well he had done amiss, and saw well it was hard for him to 'scape; then he recoiled, to get again to his garrison; but the Frenchmen were in his way. Whereunto should I make long processe? They were all taken: not one escaped. They were brought to the viscount's lodging, before the knights, who had great joy of their taking.

Thus, by the counsel of the Viscount of Meaux, Guyot du Sall and his company were attrapped and taken, and brought before the Lords of France and Auvergne. When the Viscount saw Guyot du Sall, he demanded where Aymergot Marcel was, and charged him to say the truth, for he thought he had been still in the fortress. Guyot du Sall answered, how he could not tell where he was, for he was de-

parted a twelve days past. Then the Lords thought merely that he was gone to purchase some aid. Then the prisoners were commanded apart; and the viscount demanded of the knights of Auvergne, what was best to do with Guyot du Sall, and with his company; saying, he would use himself according to their counsel. Then Sir William Butler answered and said, "Sir, I suppose that Aymergot is gone for succour, and to raise up the companions in the garrisons of Perigord and Guyenne; for he shall find several ways there to come upon us early or late, ere we be aware of them; whereby they may do us damage, for any peace or truce that is taken. This Aymergot is a subtle man. Sir, let us do one thing. Shew unto Guyot du Sall and his company, that without they cause the fortress to be surrendered unto your hands, that ye will strike off all their heads incontinent, and without they do thus, let it not be spared." "This counsel is good," quoth the viscount, "for indeed the chief occasion that we be come hither for, is to have this fortress; and though we cannot have at this time Aymergot Marcel, another season it shall fortune right well."

Then the Viscount, and the Lord de la Tour, Sir Robert Dalphin, and others, came before the fortress as near as they might approach, and thither was brought Guyot du Sall and his company. Then the viscount spake and said to Guyot du Sall: "Guyot, and all other of your company, know for truth that incontinent all your heads shall be stricken off, without ye yield up the fortress of the Roche of Vaudois; and if ye will render it up, we shall suffer you to go quit. Now advise ye well, what way ye will take, either life or death."—Of these words Guyot and his company

were sore abashed; at last they thought it was best for them to save their lives. Then Guyot answered and said, "Sir, I shall do the best I can that the fortress may be yielded to you." Then he came to the barrier, and spoke with them that were within, who reckoned themselves clean discomfited, seeing they had lost their two masters and the best of their company. As soon as Guyot had spoken with them, and declared what case they stood in, they agreed to yield up the fortress conditionally, that they might depart with bag and baggage, as much as they could carry, and to have respite for a month to withdraw them whither they list. All this was granted to them, and a sure safe conduct made and sealed. Thus the Frenchmen had the Roche of Vaudois delivered, by reason of the good fortune of their last skirmish; wherefore it is commonly said, that all fortunes, good and evil, fall oftentimes in arms to them that follow war.

When the Roche of Vaudois was yielded up to the Lords of France and Auvergne, they of the country were right joyous thereof; and the lords held well and truly the promise they had made to Guyot du Sall. When they had carried away as much as they could do, then they departed with good assurance for a month to go whither it pleased them. Then the Viscount of Meaux abandoned the Roche of Vaudois to the men of the country, who, incontinent, did raze it down, in such wise, that they left no wall, hole, nor house, nor stone upon stone, but all was reversed to the earth.

The Frenchmen that were in their king's service, with the viscount, took their leaves of the knights and squires of Auvergne, so they departed; and they of

Auvergne and Limosin went to their own houses. The Viscount of Meaux gave leave to part of his company; and he went to Rochelle, and lodged at St. Jean d'Angely, to keep there the frontier; for in the country there were some pyllers and robbers, that ran some time into Saintonges, when they saw their advantage. In the manner and form as I have shewed you, the fortress of the Roche of Vaudois was conquered and razed down, whereof all the country was joyful; for then they were in better surety than they were before; for to say the truth, if it had continued, it would have done them many displeasures.

Tidings of this deed came to the knowledge of the Duke of Berry, to Canteton, a place of his own standing, between Chartres and Montl'hery, a nine leagues from Paris. He cared nothing for it; for he was then but cold to ask any grace of the king for Aymergot. When Derby, the herald, was informed by some of the Duke's knights, how the Roche de Vaudois was taken and beaten down, then he said to the squire that came thither with him, "Sir, ye have lost a hundred francs that Aymergot had promised to you." "How so?" quoth the squire. "Surely," quoth the herald, "the Roche de Vaudois is taken and rendered; the Frenchmen have won it; therefore let us take our leave of the Duke of Berry, and return into England; w have nothing here to do." "Well," quoth the squire, "since it is so, I accord thereto." Then they took their leave of the duke. Then the duke wrote to the king of England, and to the Duke of Lancaster, and gave to the herald at his departing forty francs, and to the squire a horse: thus they departed, and took the next way to Calais, and so into England.

CAP. VII.

OF WHAT FORTUNED TO AYMERGOT MARCEL.

THEN tidings came to Aymergot Marcel, where he was purchasing of friends to have raised the siege before the fortress of Vaudois, that he was given up. When he heard thereof, he demanded how it fortuned? It was shewed him how it was by reason of a skirmish, and by the issuing out of his uncle Guyot du Sall unadvisedly. "Ah, that old traitor!" quoth Aymergot; "By Saint Marcel if I had him here now, I should slay him with mine own hands: he hath dishonoured me and all my companions. At my departing, I straitly enjoined him, that for no manner of assault or skirmish made by the Frenchmen, he should in no wise open the barriers; and he hath done the contrary. This damage is not to be recovered; nor I wot not whither to go. They of Caluçet, and they of Douzac will keep the peace, and my companions be spread abroad like men discomfited: they dare never assemble again together; and though I had them together, yet I wot not whither to bring them. Thus, all things considered, I am in a hard part; for I have greatly displeased the French king, the Duke of Berry, and the Lords of Auvergne, and all the people of the country, for I have made them war during the

peace. I had trusted to have won; but I am now in a great adventure to lose; nor I wot not to whom to resort to ask counsel. I would now that I, and my goods, with my wife, were in England; there I should be in surety, but how shall I get thither and carry all my stuff with me? I should be robbed twenty times ere I could get to the sea; for all the passages in Poitou, in Rochelle, in France, in Normandy, and in Picardy are straitly kept, it will be hard to 'scape from taking; and if I be taken, I shall be sent to the French king, and so I shall be lost, and all mine. I think the surest way for me were to draw to Bourdeaux; and, little and little, to get my goods thither; and to abide there till the war renew again: for I have good hope, after this truce, war shall be open again between England and France."

Thus Aymergot Marcel debated the matter in himself; he was heavy and sorrowful, and wist not what way to take, either to recover some fortress in Auvergne or else to go to Bourdeaux, and to send for his wife thither, and for his goods, little and little, secretly: if he had done so he had taken the surest way; but he did contrary, and thereby lost all, life and goods.

This Aymergot, in all his tribulations, remembered himself how he had a cousin-germain in Auvergne, a squire named Tournemayne, and determined to go to him and shew him all his trouble, and to take counsel of him. As he devised so he did. He and his page only came to the castle where Tournemayne was, thinking to have been there in surety because of lineage; but it proved contrary, for this squire was not in the Duke of Berry's grace nor favour. When he saw his cousin Aymergot in his house, he advised

to take him prisoner, and to advertise the Duke of Berry; that if he would forgive him his displeasure and evil-will, he would send him Aymergot Marcel, to do with him his pleasure. And, as he had devised, so he did; for, when Aymergot was within his cousin's castle, and brought to a chamber, then he laid by his sword and changed his apparel. Then he demanded of the servants, and said, "Where is my cousin Tournemayne? as yet I have not seen him." "Sir," quoth they, "he is in his chamber; please it you to come and see him?" "With a right good will," quoth Aymergot; and the servants knew right well their master's pleasure.

When Aymergot had changed his apparel, and put off a coat of defence that he was wont usually to wear, and laid away his sword, then he said, "Sirs, let us go: I would see my cousin Tournemayne; it is long since I saw him." They brought him straight to Tournemayne; and when he came to him, Aymergot did salute him as he that thought no evil. Then Tournemayne answered and said, "How!—is it Aymergot?—Who sent for you to come hither?—Ye would dishonour me; wherefore I take and arrest you as my prisoner, otherwise I should not acquit myself truly to the crown of France, nor to my lord the Duke of Berry; for ye are a false traitor: ye have broken the truce, whereto ye must answer; and for your cause my Lord of Berry hateth me deadly; but now I shall make my peace with you, for I shall deliver you to him either quick or dead."

With the which words Aymergot was sore abashed, and said, "How so, Sir?—I am your cousin—is this for certain ye shew me, or do you speak it to assay me. I am come hither on the great trust that I have

in you, to shew you my business, and you to make me such cruel cheer, and to give me so hard words! I have great marvel thereof."

"I cannot tell," quoth Tournemayne, "what ye will say; but this that I have said I shall fulfil," and so laid hands on him; and his servants knowing their master's pleasure, took Aymergot without any defence-making, for he was without weapon or armour, and also enclosed in the castle for any words that he could say; there he was taken, and irons put upon his legs, and laid in a tower, and sure keepers about him.

When this was done, he caused the castle-gates to be shut, and took the keys himself, and commanded all his servants, on pain of their lives, none of them to be so hardy to go to the gate without he sent them thither. His commandment was upheld. Then he wrote letters at his pleasure, directed to the Duke of Berry, certifying him how he had Aymergot Marcel in prison; and that if he would pardon him his evil-will, he would deliver Aymergot into his hands. When this letter was written and sealed, he commanded one of his servants, such as he trusted, to go into France to the Duke of Berry, and to deliver him his letter, and to recommend him lowly to him, and not to return without an answer. The varlet took the letter, and mounted on a good horse, and so departed, and rode so long that he came to Paris, where the Duke of Berry was, and there delivered to him his master's letter. The Duke took the letter, and read it, and smiled thereat, and said to such knights as were about him, "Sirs, will ye hear new tidings? Aymergot Marcel is taken prisoner, his own cousin Tournemayne hath taken him." The knights answered and said, "Sir, it is good tidings for the country of Auvergne

and Limosin, for they have had of him, a long season, an evil neighbour. He hath done so much evil, that if it please you he were worthy to grace the gibbet; he ought to have none other ransom nor pardon."—"I cannot say," quoth the Duke, "what the king and his council will say thereto. I will speak with them therein."

It was not long after, but that the Duke of Berry took a barge on the river of Seine, and so came to the castle of the Louvre, where the king and his council was. He shewed there these news; he caused the letter that Tournemayne had sent him to be read, of the which tidings every man was joyful; and the lords said, "It is well seen that such manner of robbers and pyllers can never come to a good end."

Then the Duke of Berry was desired to send for him by the Seneschal of Auvergne, and to be brought to Paris, and to be put in the castle of St. Antoine. Furthermore, it was ordained that Tournemayne, for the good service he had done to the crown of France, that all displeasure should be clean forgiven him; and thereupon letters patent were made and sent to him by his servant, whereof he was well content, and trusted on those letters. Then, within a short space after, the Seneschal of Auvergne, by a commission from the Duke of Berry, came to the castle of Tournemayne, and there Aymergot Marcel was delivered to him, whereof Aymergot was sore abashed when he saw himself in the company of his enemies.

Whereto should I make long process?—The Seneschal carried him, with men of arms, along through the country, and passed the rivers of Seine and Marne, by the bridge of Charenton, and so from thence to the castle of Saint Antoine. There the Viscount D'Archy

was charged with him, who as then was captain of that castle. He kept him not long, but that he was delivered to the provost of the chatelet of Paris; and true it was Aymergot offered for his ransom threescore thousand francs, but it would not be taken. He was answered, "The king is rich enough." After that he was sent to the chatelet; he was not long kept there, but that he was judged to die shamefully, like a traitor to the crown of France. And so on a day he was carried in a chariot to a place called the Halls, and there set on a pillory; then all his trespasses were read to him, and by him was Sir William of Trune, who spake much to him. It was thought that it was to know the state of certain captains in Auvergne, and whether they were consenting to his deeds or not. The lords knew well, but I could never have knowledge thereof. Thus he was executed—his head stricken off, and his body quartered; and the quarters set at every gate of Paris.

To this end came Aymergot Marcel; as of his wife and of his goods, I knew not what became further of them. [7]

END OF THE STORY OF AYMERGOT MARCEL.

NOTES

TO

AYMERGOT MARCEL.

NOTES

TO

AYMERGOT MARCEL.

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[1] *In this season, while this assembly was making ready to go into Barbary for a good intent, as to exalt the Christian Faith;* p. 255.

The expedition here alluded to was that undertaken in the year 1389, against Tunis, by knights of several nations of Christendom, aided by the galleys of the Genoese, to deliver the southern part of the Mediterranean from the power of the Infidels. It would seem, that previously to the establishment of the power of the Turks in Europe, the Saracens, though universally acknowledged (by all who would acknowledge *any* thing praiseworthy of Infidels) to be admirable land soldiers, were far from being able to cope with the Christians by sea. Froissart gives the whole of this expedition at great length, and in his very best manner. His picture of the proceedings of the Christian army before Tunis, and of those of the Saracens after their departure, is exceedingly

spirited and vivid throughout. The expedition would seem to have been undertaken originally at the instigation and request of the King of Sicily, who seems to have been ill at ease in the near vicinity of such unquiet neighbours. The Duke of Bourbon, maternal uncle to the French King, was at the head of the expedition; but there were also with him English knights and men at arms, and Genoese galleys and crossbow-men. As was usual in those times, the interests of the Christian religion were made the pretext for this invasion of Barbary. The Saracens are represented as saying, with some bitterness, and, it must be owned, great colour of justice, that the Christians had come to make war against them without even the shadow of a cause, or any pretext of quarrel.

The expedition was unsuccessful and disastrous in every way. Numberless knights and "squires of gentle blood" were slain in the various assaults and skirmishes; and many died from the excessive heat of an African sun striking upon their plate armour, which, from its very weight and closeness, would seem almost to have been sufficient to bear down or suffocate its wearer in any thing approaching to oppressive heat, and totally incapacitate him from active exertion of any kind.

Mr. Hallam has a very curious and interesting chapter on the subject of the defensive armour common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in which he compares and balances its various advantages and drawbacks. He is speaking of the *Condottieri*, but his remarks apply equally to the arms of all other Europeans of the same period; *viz.*, from about the year 1360, to the general adoption of fire-arms, upwards of an hundred years later.

I am the more willing to give part of it a place here, from its being generally applicable to a very considerable portion of these stories, as well as to that more immediately in hand:—

"These Italian armies of the fifteenth century have been remarked for one striking peculiarity. War has never been conducted at so little personal hazard to the soldier. Combats frequently occur in the annals of that age, wherein success, though warmly contested, cost very few lives even to the vanquished. Instances of this are very frequent; and an action is recorded between the Neapolitan and Papal troops in 1468, which lasted all day, and in which not only no one was killed, but it does not appear that any one was wounded. This innocence of blood was no doubt owing in a great degree to the rapacity of the Companies of Adventure, who, in expectation of enriching themselves by the ransom of prisoners, were anxious to save their lives. Much of the humanity of modern warfare was originally due to this motive *. But it was rendered more practicable by the nature of

* This is not a place to enter into a discussion on this topic; but I am very strongly inclined to doubt the accuracy of this opinion. If battles were less bloody, they were less decisive; and wars were thence far more constant. A country being the seat of war, and of such warriors as these Companions, was an evil far worse than the additional slaughter of pitched battles. Neither can I think that the system of individual ransom, arising from avarice and rapacity, can have had any effect after the cause ceased. The whole system of modern war is too thoroughly dissimilar for this isolated and evil custom to have left any visible trace upon existing practice. The humanity of modern warfare may far more justly be ascribed to the general increase of humanity and of civilization in society.—Ed.

their arms. For once, and for once only, in the history of mankind, the art of defence had outstripped that of de truction. In a charge of lancers, many fell, unhorsed by the shock, and might be suffocated or bruised to death by the pressure of their own armour ; but the lance's point could not penetrate the breast-plate; the sword would fall harmless upon the helmet; the conqueror, in the first impulse of passion, could not assail any vital part of a prostrate, but not exposed enemy. Still less was to be dreaded from the archers or cross-bowmen, who composed a large part of the infantry. The bow, indeed, as drawn by an English foot-soldier, was the most formidable of arms before the invention of gunpowder. That ancient weapon, though not perhaps common among the Northern nations, nor for several centuries after their settlement, was occasionally in use before the crusades. William employed archers at the battle of Hastings. Intercourse with the East, its natural soil, during the twelfth and thirteenth ages, rendered the bow better known; but the Europeans improved on the Eastern method of confining its use to cavalry. By employing infantry as archers, they gained increased size, more steady position, and surer aim for the bow. Much, however, depended on the strength and skill of the archer; it was a peculiarly English weapon, and none of the other principal nations adopted it so generally or so successfully. The cross-bow, which brought the strong and weak to a level, was more in favour upon the continent. This instrument is said by some writers to have been introduced after the first crusade, in the reign of Louis the Fat; but, if we may trust William of Poitou, it was employed, as well as the long bow, at the battle of Hastings. Several of the

popes prohibited it as a treacherous weapon; and the restriction was so far regarded, that in the time of Philip Augustus, its use is said to have been unknown in France. By degrees, it became more general, and cross-bowmen were considered as a very necessary part of a well-organized army. But both the arrow and the quarrel glanced away from plate armour, such as it became in the fifteenth century, impervious in every point, except when the visor was raised from the face, or some part of the body accidentally exposed. The horse, indeed, was less completely protected.

"Many disadvantages attended the security against wounds, for which this armour had been devised. The enormous weight exhausted the force, and crippled the limbs. It rendered the heat of a southern climate insupportable. In some circumstances it increased to the danger of death, as in the passage of a river or morass. It was impossible to compel an enemy to fight, because the least entrenchment or natural obstacle could stop such unwieldy assailants. The troops might be kept in constant alarm at night, and either compelled to sleep under arms, or run the risk of being surprised before they could rivet their plates of steel. Neither the Italians, however, nor the Transalpines, would surrender a mode of defence, which they ought to have deemed inglorious; but, in order to obviate some of its military inconveniences, as well as to give a concentration in attack, which lancers impetuously charging in a single line according to the practice in France, at least, during the middle ages, did not preserve; it became usual for cavalry to dismount, and, leaving their horses at some distance, to combat on foot with the lance. This practice, which must have been sin-

gularly embarrassing with the plate-armour of the fifteenth century, was introduced before it became so ponderous. It is mentioned by the historians of the twelfth century, both as a German and an English custom. We find it in the wars of Edward III. Hawkwood, the disciple of that school, introduced it into Italy; and it was practised by the English in their second wars in France, especially at the battles of Crevant and Verneuil."—*View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages;* 8vo. edit. Vol. I. pp. 504—508.

The inconveniences which are here detailed as arising from the completeness to which defensive armour was carried, were almost every one of them fatally experienced in this ill-fated expedition to Tunis. The weight, the heat, the suffocating closeness, the obstruction which it presented to active attack of the fortifications of the town, are, in point of fact, the chief causes which produced the failure of the expedition. I am far from saying that it would have otherwise succeeded; but, undoubtedly, nearly all the loss arose by these causes, as well as that discouragement, which, in its turn, gave rise to the distrusts between the French knights and the Genoese commanders of the galleys. These last were the ostensible cause of retreat; but the fact evidently was, that the leaders of the army were but too happy to seize upon any colourable pretext to retreat with something less of disaster and disgrace. That retreat was certainly conducted with very considerable skill, as the whole army was embarked and standing out to sea before the Saracens seem to have been aware of their intention to raise the siege.

This expedition is remarkable on more accounts than one. It was, I believe, the last crusade even in name;

they had ended, in *fact*, more than an hundred years before. Another, indeed, was planned—first to cover and repair the disgraces of this;—but it was prudently suggested to Charles VI., that before he went to fight for the Church, it might be as well to know what pope was the head of that Church; and whether it would not be more effectually serving the real pope (as they held in France), Clement, first to dethrone the successor to Urban—Boniface*, and to put to death such as might be disinclined to yield to any other mode of theological argument. Great preparations were made for this expedition; but it never took place, in consequence, chiefly, of the intrigues of the Duke of Brittany with the English against Charles VI., and, more especially, against the Constable de Clisson.

This "assembly," therefore, "which went into Barbary," may be considered as the last occasion on which the warriors of Christendom "took the cross;" but it is to be noted for matters of far more importance than this. The easy discomfiture of this large host, the leaders of which seem to have used very boasting language at first, would appear to have given the Saracens in Barbary a more just notion of their own power by sea, for they immediately fitted out numberless vessels, which swarmed in the Mediterranean and in the Straits, and levied large ransoms on all merchant vessels; even then, allowing them to pass only "as great grace and favour." In fact, from this time, we may date the system of the Barbary pirates, which has, more or less, existed to our own days. During the next two hundred years, or nearly so, these Barbary

* See Note [11] to Gaston de Foix.

corsairs—subsequently assisted by the Turks, who were far better sailors,—contested, and ultimately acquired the chief power in the Mediterranean Seas. The battle of Lepanto, which was fought in 1571, was the first great check which the Infidel power received upon the sea. For, though the Venetians and the Genoese had made a continued struggle against the extension of the Mussulmen arms, yet the ultimate conquests always remained with the latter.

The Mussulmen so completely gained the mastery in the Straits, as almost totally to preclude the passage of vessels to England and France. It is also to be recollected that they still possessed the kingdoms of Murcia and Granada. Froissart states, that the very next season after the failure of this expedition, the scarcity, and consequent dearness, of all merchandise from the Levant, spices especially, were very sensibly felt in France. Such of my readers as may be desirous of seeing the details of this expedition in full, will find them very amply and animatedly given in the Fourth Book of Froissart.

[2] *Or a route of Mules laden with cloth of Brussels, or peltre ware; or spicery from Bruges, from Damascus, or from Alexandria;* p. 259.

This is a curious list of names to find thus piled together. Aymergot and his merry men would seem to have had more distinct notions of the actual goings and comings of these different species of merchandise, than of their relative destinations and original countries. They were right, however, as to the two furthermost points. The Levant and the Netherlands were, indisputably, the two great marts

of natural and created riches ; and whether the spices came from Bruges, or the cloths from Damascus, was a matter of sovereign indifference to such worthies as Aymergot, provided always that they passed through the marches of Rouergue ; *i. e.*, within reachable distance for him either to seize or to ransom. I have often wondered how commerce could continue to exist while so little security was afforded to the merchant. But it would seem, that there was a general feeling, even in those rude times, that it would not do to annihilate traffic altogether ; from which sprang, I doubt not, that system of ransom which the trader placed to his general account, if not of outlay, at least of risk ; and advanced the price of his goods accordingly. We should be very wrong indeed, if we were to suppose that the rich cloths, and silks, and velvets, and spices, which we so often meet with in the pages of Froissart, and of Hall, and of other writers of tastes equally romantic and gorgeous,—were at all within the reach of the community at large. It is one of the chief faults of history—and one, too, least easily supplied—that it deals so almost uniformly in public proceedings—or, at most, in the proceedings of princes and public men,—as to leave the daily life of the great body of the community of all nations matter of difficult research for the antiquary, if the age be in any degree remote. We must, therefore, take *cum grano* the descriptions of modes of life, splendid if not luxurious—gorgeous if still in many points rude—of which we find mention so frequently in Froissart. He was a courtier, and lived among courts all his life. He was also strongly addicted to Romance and Poetry, and, thence, somewhat liberal in the notions which he seems to have entertained of the degree of license to be allowed

to historians. I do not at all accuse him of misrepresentation, or of wilful exaggeration; but the habit of aiming at effect, and the dramatic tone into which he has thrown many of his details, must unavoidably lessen that minute reality which they would primarily seem to increase. For, exactly in the proportion that in such things as passed under his own eyes, this adds to the reality of his narrative,—those which neither were nor could be personally known to him, become open to suspicion of loose accuracy. But it is evident, moreover, that the favourite of kings, and queens, and counts—the wealthy churchman—the courtly chronicler—could speak only of the ways of life which came under his own observation. On "villeyns," indeed, and "rascall people," as he calls them, he seems to have bestowed very little of his notice. I dwell on this point the more, from the very different impression which his history leaves upon the mind as to the deplorable state of France from what would be consonant with the facts; even with those which he himself records. Few things, indeed, can be more remarkable than the glow of warmth, and plenty, and beauty, and romance, which his Memoirs leave as the real impress of the time, when contrasted with the general rudeness of the period, and the extreme state of wretchedness into which France, in particular, was plunged.

It is true, that Froissart himself was a Hainaulter; and as such, when actually in his own country, had under his eyes the wealthiest and most industrious part of Christendom. The Flemish towns of the middle ages gave rise and dignity, among the Transalpines, to the commercial spirit. The northern parts of Europe owe to them, even surrounded as they were by all the rapine and ignorance of

the feudal barons, the existence of the useful arts, and the cultivation of a free spirit. Bruges, and Ghent, and Brussels, and other towns of the Low Countries, were the most advanced of any portion of Europe, north of the Alps. While England and France were spreading, and enjoying, the advantages of "those monstrous mummeries of the middle ages," chivalry, and the feudal system, the trading towns of the Low Countries and of Italy were advancing in all the arts of cultivated life—of intellectual superiority—of physical comfort. Had it not been for them, we might still have been wrapped in our untanned skins, with rushes and filth struggling for predominance on our floors, and the diseases incident upon dirt and rude living paying us a visit almost every year. Let it never be forgotten that to the burghers of these towns we owe the art of Printing, the revival of Painting—the discovery of the mariner's compass, with all its attendant train of benefits—a New World, and the passage by sea to the East. These we owe to the traders of Flanders, and of the Italian cities. For what are we to thank the feudal barons of France and England? Ignorance, craft, cruelty, and superstition, were all the seed they sowed, and the crop was proportionately barren.—They produced, however, a great number of very respectable "robbers and pyllers," fellows whose merits consisted in the bullying bravery of highwaymen, combined with something less than the honesty of a modern pickpocket. Ignorant and barbarous themselves, they seized "routes of mules" laden with the produce of other people's skill and industry; and *these* are the sort of men whom we are told to admire, duly despising the race who did no more for humanity than to confer on it all that we at this

day consider as giving to it value, and refinement, and beauty. It is not too much to say that we owe all these to the merchants of Bruges and of Venice, of Ghent and of Genoa, of Brussels and of Florence. As for the knights and barons, they could neither read nor write *; they could only give and receive dry blows and foul language.

[3] " *Certain, I sore repent me that I have done.*" p. 259.

This speech of Aymergot to his men is highly characteristic and edifying; his repentance, of course, is not for his misdeeds, but for no longer being able to continue them. I recommend the whole harangue to the reader, as a general summary and sample of what the Companions understood by the phrase that " they must live." One might be tempted to answer with Mazarin—" *Je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*"

[4] " *You are not subject to the French king; you owe him neither faith nor obeisance; you are the king of England's man;*" p. 260.

I have already said, that during the reign of Richard II., these Companions were chiefly employed as garrisons for our strong places in the south of France; till, as in this case, their rapine became too intolerable to be any longer submitted to. The holding this convenient tenet, that if they belonged to the one crown, they might, undisturbedly, prey upon the subjects of the other, seems

* The reader will find a very remarkable instance of this, even at the end of the fourteenth century, a few pages further in the text; see also Note 6.

to have been held out as a bait to derive protection from the one, in consequence of its natural antipathy to the other. The ravages committed by the Companies of Free Adventure, immediately upon the treaty of Bretigny, many historians accuse Edward III. of having connived at, and even instigated. But I confess I have been unable to see any just ground for this. It would have, at that time, been more against than for his own interest; as the rich provinces, ceded to him by that treaty, could not but ultimately feel the effects of such a system. Neither was he by any means backward in offering and preparing his promised contingent to put down these marauders. John, however, as I have already mentioned in the Notice of the Companions, thought the first evil the lesser of the two. Strong English armies in the heart of France were guests whom he had no particular ambition to see. But, in the subsequent wars, both sides employed these Companions without reserve; one of them, indeed, Du Guesclin, became Constable of France; and was one of the most renowned warriors of the period, as was Hawkwood in Italy. Aymergot Marcel, Perot le Bernois, &c., would seem to have been captains of small bands, who availed themselves of their being garrisoned in Auvergne, Rouergue, and other marches of Gascony, and the south of France, to lay the adjoining country under contribution.

[5] *And they called themselves "Adventurers."* p. 261.

Their adopting this title would seem to be asserting their claim to be regarded as one of the Free Companies of Adventure rather than merely as common "robbers and pyllers." There is a great deal in a name, even in

these days; and no doubt its efficacy was no less then. We shall see Aymergot (who appears, by the way, to have been a very clever and enterprising fellow) sending to the King of England, and the Duke of Lancaster, as being a captain who was suffering in the cause of England; which, as an "Adventurer," was quite in character; though it would not have come with quite such good grace from a "robber and pyller." These men seem all of them to have been proud of the name of Companions, or Adventurers.—*See prefixed Notice.*

[6] *Then the viscount took the letters, and beheld the seals; and he knew well that they came out of England; then he took one apart that could read; and then he read the letters, from point to point, two or three times, till he knew well what they meant.* p. 279.

Considering the rank and station of the Viscount of Meaux, and that this was towards the close of the fourteenth century, it is certainly a very remarkable instance of the extreme ignorance of the knights and barons of the period. I am not here going to enter into any thing like a dissertation upon the relative degrees and dates of ignorance; but when we see the immediate *locum tenens*, as it were, of the chief marshal of France, not able to read the letters brought to him upon matters of public business, and this, too, mentioned quite incidentally, and of course,—we may form some idea of the general degree of darkness prevalent at the time. The viscount, it seems, knew the seals of the Duke of Lancaster, and of the English council, but was not able to read a word of the contents of the letters upon which they were impressed!

We may form some idea of how much the princes of this age must have been at the mercy of a treacherous secretary, or amanuensis. It is possible that in the short summary at the end of the work, I may further notice this part of the subject.

[7] *To this end came Aymergot Marcel; as of his wife and of his goods, I know not what became further of them.* p. 302.

It is impossible, I think, not to feel some commiseration for the fate of Aymergot, in despite of the violence of his career as a "robber and pyller." It is one of the never-failing consequences of treachery to excite pity for its object and victim. If Aymergot had been hung up on the battlements of the Roche de Vaudois, having been taken in an assault immediately preceding—and while blood was still hot—it would have been an end quite in consonance with the career which it terminated; and we should have felt it to be so deserved as to preclude any feeling of compassion for a consummation so naturally to be expected. But the barter of blood has in it always something utterly repugnant to the feelings of natural justice, to say nothing of humanity. Even in the case of this obscure robber, we cannot but feel strong indignation against his kinsman and his host, for so totally slighting the rights of kindred and of hospitality, as to yield up, for his own personal advantage, the man who came to him in trust and confidence.

There is another point, also, which always occurs to me as being of but scanty justice; namely, these Companions being thus strung up as common thieves by the very peo-

ple who encouraged and retained them in their service, on the appearance of approaching hostilities—who led them to the battle one day, and to the gallows the next. Justice, above all things, should be immutable. The Companions should *always* have been equally severely punished for their crimes, and *never* employed and favoured after having committed them. It is vain to expect that men who have been trained by us, for our own advantage, to outrage and bloodshed, for a long series of years, should, when it is no longer for our advantage, become quiet citizens in a moment, at our beck and bidding. The whole system was bad in principle, and worse in practice. It was rooted in treachery, fertilized by blood—and bore the fruit which might be expected from such a tree. If the harshness of its flavour occasionally was distasteful to the palate, or the hardness of the rind now and then broke the teeth of the gatherer, who was to blame?—Why, he who planted, tended, and cultivated the tree—the gatherer of the fruit himself. Thank God, this system of culture was confined to the *good old Times.*

END OF THE NOTES TO AYMERGOT MARCEL.

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF THE

BORDER-FEUDS.

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF THE

BORDER-FEUDS

BETWEEN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND;

[BEING INTRODUCTORY TO THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.]

An historical selection, the object of which is to illustrate the manners of the Middle Ages, obviously ought to contain something bearing upon that very peculiar portion of them—the intercourse of the Borderers of England and Scotland. For this purpose, I have chosen Froissart's description of the Battle of Otterbourne—an event which may justly be considered a fair sample of the contests on the Borders—possessing, as it did, that mixture of national and local warfare by which they were so frequently distinguished. I shall preface the account of that battle individually, by some notice of the general state of the Marches.

The Border-Feuds may be divided into three classes—the forays and inroads of individual families and clans—the warden-raids, or expeditions headed by the chief nobles and rulers of the Marches—and the more general international hostilities of the two king-

doms at large. To each of these, especially the two first, I shall devote some attention.

Barbarous as were the manners of these districts, and constant as were the inroads made from both sides of the border respectively,—wanton effusion of blood cannot be said to have been among the usual crimes of the Marchmen. When a foray was undertaken solely for the sake of plunder, it was seldom or never attended by voluntary bloodshed on the part of the marauders. It is true, that they would resist to the last extremity, if a rescue of their booty was attempted: but their object was, if possible, to return with it unperceived; and, unless in the case of a family feud, they were content with pillage, without adding to it midnight conflagration, or murder. There existed, indeed, a degree of intimacy between the borderers of the two countries, which formed a singular contrast with their being so frequently engaged in international warfare, and so constantly in mutual plunder. But that it did exist is quite clear, from laws being repeatedly made in both countries to check and prevent too great and intimate a connection between the opposite sides of the Border. Nay, it is said that, when the general armies of the two nations came into the field against each other, as at Flodden, at Solway, at Pinkie, &c.—the Borderers were accustomed to wear some badge by which they might recognise and spare each other in battle. Indeed, the Scottish Marchmen might almost be considered as more nearly connected with their English neighbours, than with their own

countrymen who dwelled farther landward. They were even prohibited, by special enactment, from dwelling in the inland counties, unless they found security for their peaceable behaviour—so great was their repute for violent and unthrifty living among the more civilized inhabitants of Fife and Lothian. The payment of black mail, or protection money, also contributed to the absence of deadly animosity—by creating that bond of union which arises from giving and receiving offices of kindness and friendship.

But it is not to be supposed that such a mode of life as that common on the Borders, could subsist without frequent interruptions of this comparative good-fellowship. In the event of a favourite or eminent member of a family being slain, there arose a deadly and hereditary feud—a bequest and inheritance of revenge from father to son, which were but too awfully fulfilled. In such cases, the ruin and death not only of the offending parties, but of all connected with them by ties of kindred, alliance, or friendship, were sought with a persevering and unsparing ferocity, that exhibited a fearful contrast with the general repugnance from homicide, observable in the Border character. It is, indeed, one of the chief, and most universal, characteristics of uncivilized men, to regard the indulgence of revenge—one of the human passions the least redeemed by an admixture of good—as a moral duty instead of a heinous crime. Instances of this kind were naturally very frequent upon the Border—and, being of course followed by retaliation, gave rise

to lasting feuds, which, it is much to be wondered, were compatible with the more usual state of feeling I have described above.

The eastern Marches—which comprised the borders of Berwickshire and Northumberland—were far more civilized and peaceable than the rest of the Border. The soil of the Merse, as Berwickshire was then styled, was, even in those early days, remarkable for the high state of cultivation for which it has since become so celebrated. The same cause, namely the openness and fertility of the country, that led the inhabitants to devote their attention to agriculture, tended also to indispose them to the predatory habits of their western neighbours. Unlike the other parts of the Border, they had no fastnesses to retreat to with their spoil—to serve at once as protection and refuge. Their level and cultivated lands would be an easy prey to those who would infallibly come to retaliate upon them for any outrage they might commit to the south of the Tweed. From these causes, they early cultivated the arts of peace; and lived in good understanding with those around them.

It was on the middle and western Marches—among the wild hills, the morasses, and deep glens of Liddesdale, and Teviotdale, and Annandale, that the more peculiar habits of the Border were to be found. The terms of "Dalesmen" and "Moss-troopers" sufficiently bespeak the nature of the country in which those doughty worthies resided. Their personal appearance, and modes of life—their horses, their arms,

their partisan warfare—have of late years become familiar to the general reader, through the vivid and animated pictures of the great Northern Novelist. It would be superfluous, therefore, to enter minutely into a description of these matters. I prefer laying before my readers an account of a raid arising from a feud of blood, which will serve to shew the manners of this singular race of people far better than any details of my own could do, and which will lead me to the second division of my subject—the warden-raids. The account is given by the warden himself:—

"The death of this young man (says sir Robert Carey) wrote (wrought) so deep an impression upon them (the outlaws), as many vowes were made, that, before the end of next winter, they would lay the whole border waste. This (the murder) was done about the end of May (1598). The chiefe of all these outlaws was *old Sim of Whittram*. He had five or six sonnes, as able men as the borders had. This old man and his sonnes had not so few as two hundred at their commands, that were ever ready to ride with them to all actions, at their beck.

"The high parts of the marsh (march) towards Scotland were put in a mighty fear, and the chiefe of them, for themselves and the rest, petitioned to mee, and did assure mee, that unless I did take some course with them, by the end of that summer, there was none of the inhabitants durst, or would, stay in their dwellings the next winter, but they would fley the countrey,

and leave their houses and lands to the fury of the outlawes. Upon this complaint, I called the gentlemen of the countrey together, and acquainted them with the misery that the highest parts of the marsh towards Scotland were likely to endure, if there were not timely prevention to avoid it, and desired them to give mee their best advice what course were fitt to be taken. They all showed themselves willing to give mee their best counsailles, and most of them were of opinion, that I was not well advised to refuse the hundred horse that my lord Euers had; and that now my best way was speedily to acquaint the quene and counsaile with the necessity of having more soldiers, and that there could not be less than a hundred horse sent downe for the defence of the countrey, besides the forty I had already in pay, and that there was nothing but force of soldiers could keep them in awe: and to let the counsaile plainly understand, that the marsh, of themselves, were not able to subsist, whenever the winter and long nights came in, unlesse present cure and remedy were provided for them. I desired them to advise better of it, and to see if they could find out any other meanes to prevent their mischievous intentions, without putting the quene and countrey to any further charge. They all resolved that there was no second meanes. Then I told them my intention what I meant to do, which was, that myselfe, with my two deputies, and the forty horse that I was allowed, would, with what speede wee could, make ourselves ready to go up to the Wastes, and there wee would

entrench ourselves, and lye as near as wee could to the outlawes; and, if there were any brave spirits among them, that would go with us, they should be very well-come, and fare and lye as well as myselfe: and I did not doubte before the summer ended, to do something that should abate the pride of these outlawes. Those, that were unwilling to hazard themselves, liked not this motion. They said, that, in so doing, I might keep the countrey quiet the time I lay there; but, when the winter approached, I could stay there no longer, and that was the theeves' time to do all their mischiefe. But there were divers young gentlemen, that offered to go with mee, some with three, some with four horses, and to stay with mee as long as I would there continue. I took a list of those that offered to go with mee, and found, that, with myselfe, my officers, the gentlemen, and our servants, wee should be about two hundred good men and horse; a competent number, as I thought, for such a service.

" The day and place was appointed for our meeting in the Wastes, and, by the help of the foot of Liddisdale and Risdale, wee had soone built a pretty fort, and within it wee had all cabines made to lye in, and every one brought beds or matresses to lye on. There we stayed, from the middest of June, till almost the end of August. Wee were betweene fifty and sixty gentlemen, besides their servants and my horsemen; so that wee were not so few as two hundred horse. Wee wanted no provisions for ourselves nor our horses, for the countrey people were well payed for any thing

they brought us; so that we had a good market every day, before our fort, to buy what we lacked. The chiefe outlawes, at our coming, fled their houses where they dwelt, and betooke themselves to a large and great forest (with all their goodes), which was called the Tarras. It was of that strength, and so surrounded with bogges and marish grounds, and thicke bushes and shrubbes, as they feared not the force nor power of England nor Scotland, so longe as they were there. They sent me word, that I was like the first puffe of a haggase, hottest at the first, and bade me stay there as long as the weather would give me leave. They would stay in the Tarras Wood till I was weary of lying in the Waste; and when I had had my time, and they no whit the worse, they would play their parts, which should keep mee waking the next winter. Those gentlemen of the countrey that came not with mee, were of the same minde; for they knew (or thought at least), that my force was not sufficient to withstand the furey of the outlawes. The time I stayed at the fort I was not idle, but cast, by all meanes I could, how to take them in the great strength they were in. I found a meanes to send a hundred and fifty horsemen into Scotland (conveighed by a muffled man, not known to any of the company), thirty miles within Scotland, and the businesse was carried so, that none in the countrey tooke any alarm at this passage. They were quietly brought to the back-side of the Tarras, to Scotland-ward. There they divided themselves into three parts, and tooke up

three passages which the outlawes made themselves secure of, if from England side they should at any time be put at. They had their scoutes on the tops of hills, on the English side, to give them warning if at any time any power of men should come to surprise them. The three ambushes were safely laid, without being discovered, and about four o'clock in the morning, there were three hundred horse, and a thousand foote, that came directly to the place were the scoutes lay. They gave the alarm; our men brake down as fast as they could into the wood. The outlawes thought themselves safe, assuring themselves at any time to escape; but they were so strongly set upon, on the English side, as they were forced to leave their goodes, and betake themselves to their passages towards Scotland. There was presently five taken of the principall of them. The rest, seeing themselves, as they thought, betrayed, retired into the thicke woodes and bogges, that our men durst not follow them for fear of loosing themselves. The principall of the five, that were taken, were two of the eldest sonnes of *Sim of Whitram.* These five they brought to mee to the fort, and a number of goodes, both of sheep and kine, which satisfied most part of the countrey, that they had stolen them from.

"The five, that were taken, were of great worth and value amongst them; insomuch, that for their liberty, I should have what conditions I should demand or desire. First, all English prisoners were set at liberty. Then had I themselves, and

most part of the gentlemen of the Scottish side, so strictly bound in bondes to enter to mee, in fifteen dayes warning, any offendour, that they durst not, for their lives, break any covenant that I made with them; and so, upon these conditions, I sett them at liberty, and was never after troubled with these kind of people. Thus God blessed me in bringing this great trouble to so quiet an end; wee brake up our fort, and every man retired to his owne house." —*Carey's Memoirs*, p. 151.—*Apud the Border Minstrelsy.*

This Sir Robert Carey was the same person who is celebrated in history for carrying the news of Queen Elizabeth's death to her successor, with a speed at that time unparalleled. He was warden of the western marches; and, in that capacity, conducted the expedition of which the reader has just seen his own account. I shall now proceed to notice the peculiar circumstances attending a Warden-raid.

The government of the Borders was vested, in both countries, in wardens of the marches, eastern, middle, and western. When any offence was committed by an individual, the warden applied to the head of his clan, who either delivered him up, or was permitted to punish him himself. To be enabled to act thus summarily and certainly, it is evident that almost unlimited power over their retainers must have been possessed by the chieftains of the border tribes. And, indeed, it would seem to have been little different either in quality or degree from that of a colonel over

his regiment—or, perhaps, the analogy would be closer if I were to say, of a bandit chief over his troop. When, from circumstances either of destruction or of internal division, a clan had no recognised head, who was thus responsible for its conduct, it was denominated " a broken clan," and was then exposed to individual punishment. Hence these septs were peculiarly distinguished for depredation and rapine; for, being in great measure left to follow their own devices, they practised cattle-lifting as a regular trade —being equally unable and unwilling to draw the distinction, that what was fair prize in time of war became mere ' stolen goods' in time of peace. Indeed, these men, as also the Borderers generally, were subject to the same circumstances of temptation with the Companions of whom we have just treated. Being, from their habits, most intimately acquainted with the passes, and most thoroughly skilled in the arts of predatory warfare, they were selected, in expeditions conducted under authority, as the chosen and favourite soldiers of the army; and, being then encouraged in their depredations, they could not recognise the justice of, perhaps a few weeks afterwards, being stigmatized and punished for acts precisely similar.

To say the truth, however, it was not till a late period—I might say till the union of the crowns, that the measures nominally adopted for the quiet of the Border were very seriously enforced. The excuse of retaliation was seldom wanted to justify an inroad from one country into the other; and the circum-

stance of the wardens themselves being selected from among the Border. chieftains, rendered them very ready to listen to allegations whereon to ground a raid. These official acts of depredation—for such was in truth their character—arose thus. If a robbery was committed by an English band in Scotland, the two countries being at peace, (and *mutatis mutandis*, the case applies equally to both nations,) for which the sufferers were unable themselves to obtain redress, the warden would claim it from the similar officer on the opposite side the Border. If this were not instantly granted, he would assemble his power, and carry his raid of retaliation and reprisal into the enemy's country. Such was a warden-raid—and these were frequently carried on, when the two kingdoms were otherwise at peace. The battle of Otterbourne, from the rank of the parties concerned, as also from their local position, assumes very much the character of an enterprise of this kind.

The contests between the two nations at large, in which the armies were not confined to the inhabitants of the country around the Borders, necessarily partake less of the peculiar characteristics of 'Border feuds.' Still the scene of action was generally on the frontier—and the treaties of peace repeatedly drew the line of demarcation in a different place, as the fortune of war inclined to one side or the other. Roxburghshire was, several times, in possession of the English—and the country around Berwick frequently changed masters. Speaking in general terms, it may be observed, that in

the pitched battles between the two nations, England was nearly always victorious—Bannockburn is almost the only instance of importance to the contrary—whereas, in the marauding expeditions of the Borderers among themselves, the advantage, I conceive, generally rested with the Scotch. The skill of the English in the arts of war was so avowedly greater, that there were few if any castles of magnitude on the Scottish line, it being considered almost certain that the English would, on the first quarrel, become possessed of them, and garrison them for themselves;—so great was their superiority in attacking and defending fortified places. As a sample of the greater contests upon the Borders, I shall give the account rendered by Lord Surrey to Henry VIII. of the storming of Jedburgh. I shall leave it in the orthography in which I find it printed in the Introduction to the Border Minstrelsy, that the reader may be able to contrast it with the text of these stories. They are both the language of precisely the same date—(Lord Berners, the translator of Froissart, was, it will be remembered, governor of Calais under Henry VIII.)—and the only alteration I have made in my selections has been that of clothing them uniformly in modern spelling. And yet how antiquated does the following narrative seem in comparison!—

"Plesith it your grace to be advertised, that upon Fridaye, at x a clok at nyght, I retourned to this towne, and all the garnysons to their places assigned, the bushopricke men, my lorde of West-

moreland, and my lord Dacre, in likewise evry man home with their companys, without los of any men, thanked be God; saving viii or x slayne, and dyvers hurt, at skyrmyshis and saults of the town of Gedwurth, and the forteressis; which towne is soo suerly brent, that no garnysons, ner none other, shal bee lodged there, unto the tyme it bee newe buylded; the brennyng whereof I comytted to twoo sure men, sir William Bulmer, and Thomas Tempeste. The towne was moche bettir, then I went (*i. e.* ween'd) it had been, for there was twoo tymys moo houses therein then in Berwike, and well buylded, with many honest and faire houses therein, sufficiente to have lodged M horsemen in garnyson, and six good towres therein; whiche towne and towres be clenely distroyed, brent, and throwen downe. Undoubtedly there was noo journey made into Scotland, in noo manys day leving, with soo fewe a nombre, that is recownted to be soo high an enterprice as this, bothe with thies contremen, and Scottishmen, nor of truthe so moche hurt doon, But in th'ende a great mysfortune ded fall, onely by foly, that such ordre, as was commaunded by me to bee kepte, was not observed, the maner whereof hereaftir shall ensue. Bifore myn entre into Scotland, I appointed sir William Bulmer and sir William Evers too be marshallis of th'army; sir William Bulmer for the vangard, and sir William Evers for the rereguard. In the vangard I appointed my lord of Westmoreland, as chief, with all the bushopricke, sir William Bulmer, sir William Evers, my lord Dacre, with all his com-

pany; and with me remayned all the rest of the garnysons, and the Northumberland men. I was of counsaill with the marshallis at th' ordering of our lodgingg, and our campe was soo well envirowned with ordynance, carts, and dikes, that hard it was to entre or issue, but at certain places appointed for that purpos, and assigned the mooste commodious place of the said campe for my lord Dacre company, next the water, and next my lord of Westmoreland. And at suche tyme as my lord Dacre came into the fald, I being at the sault of th'abby, whiche contynued unto twoo houres within nyght, my seid lord Dacre wold in nowise bee contente to ly within the campe, whiche was made right sure, but lodged himself without, wherewith, at my retourne, I was not contente, but then it was to late to remove; the next daye I sente my seid lord Dacre to a strong hold, called Fernherst, the lorde whereof was his mortal enemy; and with hym, sir Arther Darcy, sir Marmaduke Constable, with viii c. of their men, one cortoute, and dyvers other good peces of ordynance for the feld (the seid Fernherste stode marvelous strongly, within a great woode); the seid twoo knights with the moost parte of their men, and Strickland, your grace servaunte, with my Kendall men, went into the woode on fote, with th' ordynance, where the said Kendall men were soo handled, that they found hardy men, that went noo foote back for theym; the other two knightes were alsoo soo sharply assayled, that they were enforced to call for moo of their men; and yet could not bring the

ordynaunce to the forteresse, unto the tyme my lord Dacre, with part of his horsemen, lighted on fote; and marvelously hardly handled himself, and fynally, with long skirmyshing, and moche difficultie, gat for the th' ordynance within the howse and threwe downe the same. At which skyrmyshe, my seid lord Dacre, and his brother, sir Cristofer, sir Arthure, and sir Marmaduke, and many other gentilmen, did marvellously hardly; and found the best resistence that hath been seen with my comyng to their parties, and above xxxii Scottis sleyne, and not passing iiij Englishmen, but above lx hurt. Aftir that, my seid lord retournyng to the campe, wold in nowise bee lodged in the same, but where he laye the furst nyght. And he being with me at souper, about viij a clok, the horses of his company brak lowse, and sodenly ran out of his feld, in such nombre, that it caused a marvellous alarome in our feld; and our standing watche being set, the horses cam ronnyng along the campe, at whome were shot above one hundred shief of arrowes, and dyvers gonnys, thinking they had been Scotts, that wold have saulted the campe; fynally, the horses were soo madde, that they ran like wild dere into the feld; above xv c. at the leest, in dyvers companys, and, in one place, above l fell downe a gret rok, and slewe theymself, and above ij c. ran in to the towne being on fire, and by the women taken, and carried away right evill brent, and many were taken agayne. But, fynally, by that I can esteme by the nombre of theym that I sawe goo on foote the next daye, I think there is lost above

viij c. horses, and all with foly, for lak of not lying within the campe. I dare not write the wondres that my lord Dacre, and all his company, doo saye they sawe that nyght, vj tymys of spirits and fereful sights. And unyversally all their company saye playnly, the devill was that nyght among theym vi tymys; whiche mysfortune hath blemyshed the best journey that was made in Scotland many yeres. I assure your grace I found the Scottes, at this tyme, the boldest men, and the hotest, that ever I sawe any nation, and all the journey, upon all parts of th'army, kepte us with soo contynuall skyrmyshe, that I never sawe the like. If they myght assemble xl M as good men as I nowe sawe, xv c. or ij M, it wold bee a hard encountre to mete theym. Pitie it is of my lord Dacres losse of the horses of his company; he brought with hym above iiij M. men, and came and lodged one night in Scotland, in his moost mortal enemy's contre. There is noo herdyer, ner bettir knyght, but often tyme he doth not use the most sure order, which he hath nowe payed derely for. Written at Berwike the xxvij of September.

"Your most bownden,

"T. SURREY."

During the reign of Edward VI., the contest between the two countries again assumed the appearance of international hostilities; and the Battle of Pinkie added another to the already long list of defeats in-

curred by the Scotch when opposed to the English in regular pitched battles." But, in the days of Elizabeth, the Border warfare regained, as we have seen from *Carey's Raid*, its more usual character. Her wily opposition to her rival Mary, cloaked as it was under specious professions of friendship, was exactly calculated to produce and to foster those petty outbreaks, and harassing and vexatious expeditions, which were so well suited to the genius of the Moss-troopers of the Marches. The Scottish side of the Border was ravaged, during that period, by fierce and exterminating contests between rival clans for the government of those unruly districts. The families of Cessford and Fairnihirst, two branches of the house of Ker, struggled for supremacy on the Middle Marches; while the feuds between the Johnstones and Maxwells, on the western border, scarcely amounted to less than a civil war. During their continuance, two chieftains of each family lost their lives;—one died of a broken heart, one was slain in action, one was assassinated, and one beheaded.

Neither did there exist much better peace between the opposite sides of the Border. The officers of each nation met repeatedly to adjust all differences—but these meetings frequently occasioned fresh quarrels. A very remarkable instance of this arose in the irregular capture of a celebrated freebooter, known under the designation of Kinmont Willie, concerning whose exploits a ballad is preserved in the Border Minstrelsy. It appears, on the authority of Spottis-

woode, that the deputies respectively of Lord Scroop, the English warden of the Western Marches, and of the Laird of Buccleuch, the keeper of Liddesdale, having met on a day of truce, to arrange some matters of ordinary business,—the English officer, by name Salkeld, on the breaking up of the conference, surprised and carried off Kinmont Willie, as he was returning to his own house. This irregular capture was warmly remonstrated against. But Lord Scroop said that, as the man had been taken, however irregularly, he could not give him up without orders from his government—he being such a notorious malefactor. Buccleuch, however, was not a person to be trifled with:—"Upon intelligence," continues Spottiswoode, "that the castle of Carlisle, wherein the prisoner was kept, was surprisable, he employed some trusty persons to take a view of the postern gate, and measure the height of the wall, which he meant to scale by ladders, and, if those failed, to break through the wall with some iron instruments, and force the gates. This done so closely as he could, he drew together some two hundred horse, assigning the place of meeting at the tower of Morton, some ten miles from Carlisle, an hour before sun-set. With this company, passing the water of Esk, about the falling, two hours before day, he crossed Eden beneath Carlisle bridge (the water, through the rain that had fallen, being thick), and came to the Sacery, a plain under the castle. There making a little halt, at the side of a small bourn, which they called Cadage, he caused eighty of the company to

light from their horses, and take the ladders, and other instruments which he had prepared, with them. He himself, accompanying them to the foot of the wall, caused the ladders to be set to it, which proving too short, he gave order to use the other instruments for opening the wall nigh the postern; and finding the business likely to succeed, retired to the rest whom he had left on horseback, for assuring those that entered upon the castle against any irruption from the town. With some little labour a breach was made for single men to enter, and they who first went in broke open the postern for the rest. The watchmen, and some few the noise awaked, made a little restraint, but they were quickly repressed, and taken captive. After which they passed to the chamber wherein the prisoner was kept; and, having brought him forth, sounded a trumpet, which was a signal to them without that the enterprise was performed. My Lord Scroop and Mr. Salkeld were both within the house, and to them the prisoner cried 'a good night!' The captives taken in the first encounter were brought to Bacleuch, who presently returned them to their master, and would not suffer any spoil or booty, as they term it, to be carried away; he had straitly forbidden to break open any door, but that where the prisoner was kept, though he might have made prey of all the goods within the castle, and taken the warden himself captive; for he would have it seen, that he did intend nothing but the reparation of his majesty's honour. By this time the prisoner was brought forth, the town

had taken the alarm, the drums were beating, the bells ringing, and a beacon put on the top of the castle, to give warning to the country. Whereupon Bacleuch commanded those that entered the castle, and the prisoner, to horse; and marching again by the Sacery, made to the river at the Stony-bank, on the other side, whereof certain were assembled to stop his passage; but he, causing to sound the trumpet, took the river, day being then broken, and they choosing to give him way, he retired in order through the Grahams of Esk (men at that time of great power, and his unfriends), and came back into Scottish ground two hours after sun-rising, and so homewards."

This transaction occasioned a great dispute between the two nations, which had nearly terminated in a war. After very considerable negotiation, it was at last determined that commissioners, of both countries, should meet at Berwick, to settle these and all other matters relating to the peace of the Border. The result of this conference was, that it was agreed that a number of malefactors who were mutually recognized as such, should be delivered up by the wardens and other officers of the Borders, on both sides, by a given day—to be detained prisoners until they made satisfaction for the goods they had stolen respectively. And, in the event of any of the officers on either side not performing these conditions, they themselves should be delivered into ward of the opposite party, till the stipulations agreed upon by the commissioners were fulfilled. All the officers, on both sides, duly delivered their prisoners

except Buccleuch, the keeper of Liddesdale, and Sir Robert Ker, the Scottish warden of the Middle Marches. This is an additional proof of the ungovernable nature of the inhabitants of these districts, that the whole power of these chieftains proved unable to seize the freebooters, whose delivery was the only means of averting their own. They, accordingly, both went into captivity into England. It seems they had the privilege of choosing their guardians; and it may be mentioned as a trait honourable to both parties, that Sir Robert Ker chose Sir Robert Carey, his opposite officer, between whom and himself there existed great animosity. "When Sir Robert Ker's day of delivery came," says Carey in his memoirs, "hee failed too, and my lord Hume, by the king's command, was to deliver him prisoners into Barwicke upon the like termes, which was performed. Sir Robert Ker (contrary to all men's expectation) chose mee for his guardian, and home I brought him to my own house, after hee was delivered to mee. I lodged him as well as I could, and tooke order for his diet, and men to attend on him, and sent him word, that (although by his harsh carriage towards mee, ever since I had that charge, he could not expect any favour, yet) hearing so much goodness of him, that hee never broke his word, if hee should give mee his hand and credit to be a true prisoner, he would have no guard sett upon him, but have free liberty for his friends in Scotland to have ingresse and regresse to him as oft as hee pleased. He tooke this very kindly

at my handes, accepted of my offer, and sent mee thankes.

"Some four dayes passed; all which time his friends came into him, and hee kept his chamber. Then hee sent to mee and desired mee, I would come and speake with him, which I did: and after long discourse, charging and re-charging one another with wrong and injuries, at last, before our parting, wee became good friends, with greate protestations, on his side, never to give mee occasion of unkindnesse again. After our reconciliation hee kept his chamber no longer, but dined and supt with mee. I tooke him abroad with me at the least thrice a weeke, a hunting, and every day wee grew better friends. Bocleuch, in a few dayes after, had his pledges delivered, and was sett at liberty. But sir Robert Kerr could not gett his, so that I was commanded to carry him to Yorke, and there to deliver him prisoner to the archbishop, which accordingly I did. At our parting, he professed greate love unto mee for the kinde usage I had shewn him, and that I would find the effects of it upon his delivery, which hee hoped would be shortly.

"Thus wee parted; and, not long after, his pledges were gott, and brought to Yorke, and hee sett at liberty. After his retourne home, I found him as good as his word. Wee mett oft at dayes of truce, and I had as good justice as I could desire; and so wee continued very kinde and good friends, all the time that I stayed in that march, which was not long."

The regulations settled by the commissioners who

met at Berwick, had, in the mass, great tendency to promote the peace of the Border. One of the articles stipulated, that "all wardens and keepers should be discharged from seeking reparation of injuries, in the ancient hostile mode of riding, or causing to ride, in warlike manner, against the opposite march." This manner had been indeed warlike, and had been solemnly recognized and reinforced as lately as the 6th year of Edward VI. Any person who had lost goods placed a burning wisp of straw upon the point of a spear, and carrying it through the Marches, sounding horns, and whooping a war-cry, as he went, raised the country for help. Every person, on hearing this cry, was obliged " to follow," as the phrase was, " the fray across the Border," under pain of death. Bloodhounds, also, were used in these expeditions.

These and other similar barbarous practices were put down by the Commission at Berwick ; but it was only the union of the government of the two countries that finally sheathed the sword upon the Borders. By that event all the motives were destroyed which had led the rulers of the respective nations now to encourage, now to connive at, the depredations with which their subjects harassed and impoverished one another. The interests of the whole had become common ; and James and his council determined, in the words of his national proverb, that "Hawks suldna pike out hawks' een." Various laws, therefore, were passed, of progressive severity, to insure the peace of the Borders ; —and, unlike former times, they were now rigidly

enforced. But it was far from being an easy task to reclaim at once a whole population of freebooters from habits of rapine that had been the growth of ages. The fact, to them distant and unfelt, that the English crown was placed upon the head of their native king, could not operate a revolution in their modes of life, and principles of feeling and of thought. "To follow a fray over the border" seemed to them as natural and lawful, when James was removed to Whitehall, as when he had inhabited Holyrood. By degrees, therefore, the severity of the enactments against moss-trooping increased. Regulations even were passed to dismount and disarm the whole population of the Western Borders;—but to carry into effect a proclamation such as this was a very different thing from its promulgation. At length, the expedient was devised of removing the most warlike inhabitants of the Marches. To this end, Buccleuch formed a legion for the service of Holland of the most daring and active moss-troopers;—and all the most turbulent and restless spirits enlisted under his banner, and carried their love and their practice of arms into distant countries. The tract called the Debateable Land, which, being in dispute between the two countries, had alternately belonged nominally to each, and in fact never to either,—was, from these circumstances, inhabited by tribes distinguished for being unruly and predatory even among that population of turbulent marauders. One of the principal tribes of this district, the clan of Græme, was transported, in mass, to Ireland, and their return

prohibited under pain of death. Thus the most violent and lawless of the marchmen being removed, the Borders by degrees, slow indeed, but still regularly progressive, subsided into habits of peacefulness; and the hills that once gleamed and rang with the spears and corslets of the celebrated horsemen of the Marches, now display only the grey plaid of the shepherd, and echo but to the bleatings of his many flocks.

I have been purposely more than ordinarily concise in the foregoing sketch, from the belief that the borders of England and Scotland, with the feuds and raids of their ancient story, have of late become familiarly known to all classes of readers. The genius of the great Minstrel of the Border, concluding it to be the same as that of its still greater Legendary writer, has rendered most of the southern (and indeed some of the northern) countries of Scotland almost classic ground. Perhaps, it may be somewhat of "a foregone conclusion," but I cannot but always consider the great Scottish Novelist and Poet as *more* at home on the Border than when he gets further north, especially into the Highlands. Though equally "his native land," the former appears to be more exclusively "his own." The forays and raids of the Armstrongs, the Elliotts, the Scotts, the Kers, on one side of the Border; and of the Percies, the Howards, the Haggerstones, and Featherstones, on the other, seem (to me, at least) matter more germane to his genius than the contests between Highland chieftains, or of refractory

clans with their southron sovereigns. And, in truth, no wonder;—"The Sheriff of the Forest" would have far less of those feelings of locality and of clanship than he so peculiarly manifests on every possible occasion, did he not sing more *con amore* of the beauties of "fair Melrose," and of the deeds of that name over which he has shed such unfading lustre, than of

> "The boo less host of highborn beggars,
> Macleans, M'Kenzies, and M'Gregors,"

amongst whom he has occasionally ventured to lead us beyond the Highland line. From the times, indeed, in which that genius first appeared above the horizon in the Minstrelsy of the Border, through those of the Last Minstrel, and even of Marmion, down to the more recent glories of Mannering, and Osbaldistone, and Claver'se, and Cannie Elshie, and Lammermuir, and Avenel,—with Kennaquhair and its monks, and Clydesdale and its conventicles,—through this (almost unlimited) series of triumphs and successes,—the genius of the Poet and of the Tale-teller alike has hovered near the Border, and achieved its greatest glories in illustrating and celebrating the deeds of its romantic history.

It is, indeed, the circumstance of their having then occupied the pen of men of such eminence as this author, that has raised the spirit from which they sprangi nto such very undue favour with us, who (thank Heaven!) live beyond its influence. We see it only through the haze of the time—which

softens and throws false appearance over the hard outline and blood-stained details, that so universally form its true portraiture; and nowhere more than in Scottish history, and more particularly in Border history. Those feuds, descending in revenge, from generation to generation, for ages, are certainly a strange subject to have called forth so much poetry, both in verse and prose, from one of such evident kindliness and humanity as this celebrated writer—one who has brought these periods into more light and notice than all his countrymen put together; and who has thrown a mantle of interest and romance over the nakedness of the coarse and mean ruffianism of the age. He has contrived, by some extraordinary charm, to ennoble the deeds of cattle-stealers, and to polish the hard and fierce natures of the Douglases and the Grahames, the Maxwells and the Homes, of the ever-warring history of his country. But thus it is, that the romantic points of a subject fascinate genius, to the exclusion of severer fact—and genius, again, gives its aid and its name to ennoble the questionable heroes of Romance.

It is the province, however, of those who deal with history—though only in the humble shape of these Annotations—to adhere, with scrupulous exactness, to that which *is*, without regard to whether it be, or be not picturesque. And thus, if the reader rise from the perusal of these volumes with a different impression of the Era of Chivalry, from that which he has heretofore felt;—if he find that the most

knightly names differ from the rude freebooters of the Border, rather in the stage upon which their deeds were acted, than in the quality of the deeds themselves,—he must blame those who performed the actions, not him who records them. Above all things, let him bear in mind, if at any time he be carried away by the spirit and gorgeousness of the Chronicler's narrative, that in every one of these "noble feats of arm," performed too as they were in causes any thing but national,—the fields of the humble and defenceless peasant were ravaged,—his hearth was made desolate, his roof-tree laid low. If there were none but "princes and peers" in the world, these scenes of war might excite the imagination, without revolting the heart;—but when we consider what was the lot of the great mass of mankind, we must surely be grateful that we did not live in those ages, either to do or to suffer.

The Battle of Otterbourne.

THE

BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE*.

CAP. I

OF THE ASSEMBLING OF THE SCOTS, TO MAKE A JOURNEY INTO ENGLAND.

A.D. 1388. YE have heard here before how King Richard of England had some trouble; he against his uncles, and his uncles against him, with other divers incidents as by the Duke of Ireland and other, and many knights in England dead and beheaded. And the Archbishop of York, brother to the Lord Neville, was at a point to have lost his benefice; and, by the new councillors about the king, and by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord

* For any particular explanation, or passing comment, which the details of this Story may have seemed to me to require,—I request my readers will turn to the general Note on the Battle of Otterbourne, which I have appended. I have preferred this course to breaking the text with repeated references; which, as the subject is strictly exclusive to one topic, there was the less reason to scatter through the narrative.—ED.

Neville (who had been the chief ruler and keeper of the frontiers of Northumberland against the Scots, five years together) was as then put out of wages: He had before, every year, sixteen thousand francs out of the county of York and bishopric of Durham. And there was set in his stead the Lord Henry Percy, and he had to wages by the year, but eleven thousand francs: whereof other lords of his lineage, though they were of his kin, yet they had thereat great envy and indignation one against another; and all this knew right well the Scots.

Then the lords and knights of Scotland determined once again to raise up an army, and to make a journey into England. They said it was as then good time and hour, for they saw the Englishmen were all of one accord; and whereas, of times past, they had received great buffets, then, they said, it was good time for them to be revenged. And to the intent that their purpose should not be known, they ordained a feast to be holden on the frontier of the Wild Scots, at a city, called Aberdeen, where assembled in manner all the lords of Scotland. At this feast they concluded and made full promise that in the midst of August, the year of our Lord God a thousand three hundred fourscore and eight, they should meet all with their puissance on the frontiers of Cumberland, at a castle in the high forest called Jedworth. Thus at that time they departed each from the other, and of this covenant there was none of them that made their king privy thereto, for they said among themselves their king was no man of war.

There came to Jedworth at the day appointed, first, the Earl James Douglas, Sir John of Moray, Earl of March and of Dunbar, Sir William of Fife, and Sir

Stephen Earl of Monteith, Sir Archibald of Douglas, Sir Robert Erskine, Sir John Gordon, Sir William Lindsay, and Sir James, his brother; Thomas of Berry, Sir Alexander Lindsay, the Lord of Seton, Sir John of Sandilands, Sir Patrick of Dunbar, Sir John Sinclair, Sir Patrick of Hepburne, Sir John, son to the Lord Montgomery, Sir Adam Glendinning, Sir William Rutherford, Sir William Stronach, Sir John of Haliburton, Sir Alexander and Sir Robert Lauder, Sir Stephen Frazer, Sir Alexander Ramsay, and Sir John, his brother; Sir William Mowbray, Sir Robert Hart, Sir William of Walcran, Sir John Edmonstone, and Davy his son; Robert Campbell, and divers other knights and squires of Scotland. In threescore year before that, there was not assembled together in Scotland such a number of good men. They were a eleven hundred spears, and eleven thousand men beside, with their archers; but, in time of need, the Scots have little skill with their bows; they rather bear axes, wherewith they give great strokes.

When they were thus met together in the marches of Jedworth they were merry, and said, they would never enter again into their own houses till they had been in England, and done such deeds there that it should be spoken of twenty years after; and to the intent to make sure appointment, they assigned a day to meet at a church in a fair land near the border. Tidings came into Northumberland (as nothing can be hid if men put to their diligence to know) both to the earl and to his children, to the Seneschall of York, and to Sir Mathew Redman, captain of Berwick, of this great feast that had been at Aberdeen; and, to the intent to know wherefore it was, their lords sent to search covertly by heralds and minstrels. The Scots

could not do their matters so secretly but the lords of England knew how men rose in Scotland, and how they should meet again at Jedworth. Bruit of this came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and when the lords knew of this, every man took good heed to his charge, and provided themselves ready to assemble, if need were; and this they did secretly, because their enterprise should not be broken: every man held himself in their own houses because they were determined to meet together as soon as they knew that the Scots came forward, and said, if the Scots come forth we shall have knowledge thereof, if they draw toward Carlisle we shall enter at another part into their country, and we shall do then more damage than they can do us, for their country is all open; we may go where we list, and our country is strong, and the towns and castles well closed.

And the better to know the state of the Scots, they sent a gentleman of England, who knew right well the marches of Scotland, and especially the forest of Jedworth, where the Scots should assemble. And the English squire went so forward that, without espying, he came to where the Scottish lords were, and he entered in among them like one of their servants, and there he heard and knew a great part of the intents of the Scots. And, at the end of their council, the squire went to a tree where he had tied his horse, and thought to have found him there, but he was gone, for a Scot (who be great thieves) had stolen him away. He durst not speak for him, but so went forth a foot, booted and spurred. And when he was gone from the church two bow shot, then there were two Scottish knights devised between themselves, and said, one to another—"I have

seen a marvel: Behold, yonder a man goeth alone, and, as I think, he hath lost his horse, for he came by and spake no word. I wene he be none of our company; let us ride after him to prove my saying." They rode after him, and soon overtook him. When he saw them coming he would gladly have been thence: they came to him and demanded whither he would go, and from whence he came; and what he had done with his horse? He began to vary in his saying, and answered not directly to their purpose. They turned him and said he should go and speak with their lords. They brought him and presented him to the Earl Douglas, and to other lords: they examined him and perceived well he was an Englishman; then they said they would know the truth why he came thither. He was evil willing to shew the truth, but they handled him in such wise that he was fain to shew all the matter; for they bare him in hand, without he would shew the truth he should incontinent lose his head, and if he would shew the truth he should have none evil. There they knew by him that the lords of Northumberland had sent him thither to know the state of their enterprise, and which way they would draw. Hereof the Scots were right joyous, and would not for a good deal but they had spoken with this squire. Then they demanded again of him in what part the English lords were, and whether there were any appearance that they would assemble together, and what way they would take to enter into Scotland, either by the sea-side, by Berwick, or else by Dunbar, or else the highway by the county of Monteith towards Stirling. The squire answered and said—"Sirs, since it behoveth me to say the truth I shall:—

"When I departed from them from Newcastle, there was none appearance of their assembling, but they be on a readiness to depart as well to-day as to-morrow; and, as soon as they know that ye set forward and enter into England, they will not come to meet with you, for they be not of the power to do so, nor to fight with you since ye be so great a number as is said in England that ye be."

"Why," quoth the Earl of Moray, "what number do they repute us at?"

"Sir," quoth he, "it is said how ye be eleven thousand men, and twelve hundred spears; and, if ye take the way into Cumberland, they will go by Berwick, and so to Dunbar, to Edinborough, or else to Dalkeith; and, if ye take not that way, then they will go by Carlisle, and into the mountains of the country."

When the lords heard that, each of them regarded the other: then the English squire was put to the keeping of the constable of Jedworth, and commanded that he should be surely kept: then, in the same place, they went again to council.

The lords of Scotland were right joyful of that they knew surely the intent of their enemies, and then they demanded counsel what way was best for them to take. The most wise and best expert in war spake first; and those were Sir Archibald Douglas and the Earl of Fife; Sir Alexander Ramsay, Sir John Sinclair, and Sir James Lindsay. They said, for fear of failing of our intent, we counsel that we make two armies, to the intent that our enemies shall not know whereunto to attend, and let the most part of our host and carriage go by Carlisle, in Cumberland, and let the other company of a three or four hundred spears, and two thousand of other, well horsed, draw towards

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and pass the river and enter into the bishopric of Durham, and burn and pillage the country. We shall make a great bruit in England ere our enemies be provided; and if we see that they do follow us, as they will do, then let us draw all our companies together, and take a good place and fight with them; we doubt not but we shall have honour. Then let us be revenged of the damages they have done us. This counsel was accepted; and it was ordained that Sir Archibald Douglas, the Earl of Fife, the Earl of Sutherland, the Earl of Montrose, the Earl of Mar, the Earl of Stratherne, Sir Stephen of Frazer, Sir George of Dunbar, and sixteen other great lords of Scotland, should lead the most part of the army towards Carlisle: and the Earl Douglas, Sir George Earl of Mar, and of Dunbar, and the Earl John of Moray, these three to be captains of three hundred spears of chosen men, and of two thousand other men and archers, and they to go towards Newcastle and enter into Northumberland. Thus these two hosts departed from each other, each of them praying the other that if the Englishmen followed any of their armies, not to fight with them till both their armies were joined together. Thus, in a morning they departed from Jedworth and took the field.

CAP. II.

OF THE ENTRY INTO ENGLAND OF THE EARL DOUGLAS'S PARTY.

A.D. 1388. WHEN the English lords saw that their squire returned not again at the time appointed, and could not know any thing what the Scots did, nor what they were purposed to do, then they thought well that their squire was taken. The lords sent each to the other to be ready whensoever they should hear that the Scots were abroad; as for their messenger, they thought him but lost.

Now let us speak of the Earl Douglas, and other; for they had more to do than they that went by Carlisle.

When the Earls of Douglas, of Moray, of De la Mar and Dunbar, departed from the great host, they took their way, thinking to pass the water, and to enter into the bishopric of Durham, and to ride to the town and then to return, burning and pillaging the country; and so come to Newcastle, and to lodge there in the town in the despite of all the Englishmen. And as they determined, so they did assay to put it in use, for they rode a great pass under covert without doing of any pillage by the way, or assaulting of any castle, tower, or house, but so came into the Lord Percy's land, and passed the river of Tyne without any let,

a three leagues above Newcastle, not far from Branspath, and, at last, entered into the bishopric of Durham, where they found a good country: then they began to make war, to slay people, and to burn villages, and to do many sore displeasures; as at that time the Earl of Northumberland, and the other lords and knights of that country, knew nothing of their coming. When tidings came to Newcastle and to Durham that the Scots were abroad, and that they might well see by the fires and smoke abroad in the country; the earl sent to Newcastle his two sons, and sent commandment to every man to draw to Newcastle, saying to his sons—"Ye shall go to Newcastle, and all the country shall assemble there, and I shall tarry at Alnwick, which is a passage that they must pass by; if we may enclose them, we shall speed well." Sir Henry Percy, and Sir Ralph his brother, obeyed their father's commandment, and came thither with them of the country. The Scots rode burning and pillaging the country, that the smoke thereof came to Newcastle. The Scots came to the gates of Durham and skirmished there; but they tarried not long, but returned, as they had ordained before to do; and what they found by the way, they took and destroyed. Between Durham and Newcastle is but twelve leagues English, and a good country; there was no town, without it was closed, but it was burnt. And the Scots re-passed the River of Tyne, where they had passed before, and then came before Newcastle, and there rested. All the English knights and squires of the county of York and bishopric of Durham, were assembled at Newcastle. And thither came the Seneschal of York, Sir Ralph Mowbray, Sir Ralph Red-

mayne, Captain of Berwick, Sir Robert Angle, Sir Thomas Grey, Sir Thomas Holeon, and divers other, so that the town was so full of people that they wist not where to lodge.

When these three Scottish earls, who were chief captains, had made their enterprise in the bishopric of Durham, and had sore over-run the country, then they returned to Newcastle, and there rested and tarried two days, and every day they skirmished. The Earl of Northumberland's two sons were two young lusty knights; and were ever foremost at the barriers to skirmish: there were many proper feats of arms done and achieved; there was fighting hand to hand. Among other, there fought hand to hand the Earl Douglas and Sir Henry Percy; and, by force of arms, the Earl of Douglas won the penon of Sir Henry Percy, wherewith he was sore displeased, and so were all the Englishmen: and the Earl Douglas said to Sir Henry Percy—"Sir, I shall bear this token of your prowess into Scotland, and shall set it on high on my castle at Dalkeith that it may be seen far off."

"Sir," quoth Sir Henry, "ye may be sure ye shall not pass the bounds of this country till ye be met withal in such wise that ye shall make none avaunt thereof."

"Well, Sir," quoth the Earl Douglas, "come this night to my lodging and seek for your penon: I shall set it before my lodging, and see if ye will come to take it away."

It was then late; and the Scots withdrew to their lodgings and refreshed them with such as they had; they had flesh enough: they made that night good watch, for they thought surely to be awaked for the

words they had spoken, but they were not, for Sir Henry Percy was counselled not so to do. The next day the Scots dislodged and returned towards their own country, and so came to a castle and a town called Pontland, whereof Sir Haymon of Alphell was lord, who was a right good knight; there the Scots rested, for they came thither betimes, and understood that the knight was in his castle. Then they ordered to assail the castle, and gave a great assault, so that by force of arms they won it, and the knight within it. Then the town and castle was burnt, and from thence the Scots went to the town and castle of Otterbourne, an eight English miles from Newcastle, and there lodged. That day they made no assault; but the next morning they blew their horns and made ready to assail the castle, which was strong, for it stood in the marsh; that day they assaulted till they were weary, and did nothing; then they sounded the retreat, and returned to their lodging. Then the lords drew to council, to determine what they should do: the most part were of the accord that the next day they should dislodge without giving of any assault, and to draw fair and easily towards Carlisle: but the Earl Douglas brake that counsel, and said—"In despite of Sir Henry Percy, who said he would come and win again his penon, let us not depart hence for two or three days: let us assail this castle; it is pregnable: we shall have double honour: and then let us see if he will come and fetch his penon; he shall be well defended."

Every man accorded to his saying, what for their honour, and for the love of him; also they lodged there at their ease, for there was none that troubled

them: they made many great lodgings of boughs and green herbs; and fortified their camp sagely with the marsh that was thereby, and their carriages were set at the entry into the marshes, and they had all their beasts within the marsh. Then they apparelled for to assault the next day: this was their intention.

CAP. III.

OF THE NIGHT-ATTACK OF THE ENGLISH ON THE SCOTTISH CAMP.

Now let us speak of Sir Henry Percy and of Sir Ralph his brother, and shew somewhat of the matters that they did. They were sore displeased that the Earl Douglas had won the penon of their arms; also it touched greatly their honours if they did not as Sir Henry Percy said he would. For he had said to the Earl Douglas that he should not carry his penon out of England, and also he had openly spoken it before all the knights and squires that were at Newcastle. The Englishmen there thought surely that the Earl Douglas' band was but the vanguard of the Scots, and that their host was left behind. The knights of the country, such as were well expert in arms, spake against Sir Henry Percy's opinion, and said to him, "Sir, there fortuneth in war oftentimes many losses; if the Earl Douglas have won your penon, he bought it dear, for he came to the gate to seek it, and was well beaten; another day ye shall win as much of him, or more. Sir, we say this because we know well all the power of Scotland is abroad in the field; and peradventure they have made this

skirmish with us to the intent to draw us out of the town; and the number that they be of, as it is said, above forty thousand men; they may soon enclose us, and do with us what they will; it were better to lose a penon than two or three hundred knights and squires, and put all our country in adventure." These words refrained Sir Henry and his brother, for they would do nothing against counsel. These tidings came to them by such as had seen the Scots, and had seen all their demeanour, and what way they took, and where they rested.

It was shewed to Sir Henry Percy, and to his brother, and to the other knights and squires that were there, by such as had followed the Scots from Newcastle, and had well advised their doing, who said to Sir Henry and Sir Ralph, "Sirs, we have followed the Scots privily, and have discovered all the country. The Scots be at Pontland, and have taken Sir Haymon Alphell in his own castle; and from thence they be gone to Otterbourne, and there they lay this night; what they will do to-morrow we know not: they are ordained to abide there, and, Sirs, surely their great host is not with them, for in all they pass not there a three thousand men."

When Sir Henry heard that, he was joyful, and said, "Sirs, let us leap on our horses, for by the faith I owe to God, and to my lord my father, I will go seek for my penon, and dislodge them this same night."

The knights and squires that heard him agreed thereto, and were joyous, and every man made him ready. The same evening, the Bishop of Durham came thither with a good company; for he heard at Durham how the Scots were before Newcastle, and how that the Lord Percy's sons with other lords and

knights should fight with the Scots. Therefore the Bishop of Durham, to come to the rescue, had assembled up all the country, and so was coming to Newcastle. But Sir Henry Percy would not abide his coming, for he had with him six hundred spears, knights and squires, and eight thousand footmen; they thought that sufficient number to fight with the Scots, if they were not but three hundred spears, and three thousand of other. Thus they departed from Newcastle after dinner, and set forth in good order, and took the same way that the Scots had done, and rode to Otterbourne, a seven little leagues from thence, and fair way; but they could not ride fast because of their footmen. And when the Scots had supped, and some laid down to their rest, being weary of travelling, and of assaulting the castle all that day, and thought to rise early in the morning in cool of the day to give a new assault,—therewith suddenly the Englishmen came on them and entered into their lodgings. Then the Englishmen cried "Percy! Percy!" and ye know well where such affray is, noise is soon raised; and it fortuned well for the Scots; for when they saw the Englishmen came to wake them, then the lords sent a certain of their servants of footmen to skirmish with the Englishmen at the entry of the lodgings; and, in the mean time, they armed and apparelled them every man under his banner, and under his captain's penon. The night was far on, but the moon shone so bright as it had been, in a manner, day. It was in the month of August, and the weather fair and temperate.

Thus, the Scots were drawn together, and without any noise departed from their lodgings, and went about a little mountain, which was greatly for their advantage; for all the day before they had well advised the

place, and said among themselves, "If the Englishmen come on us suddenly, then we will do thus and thus, for it is a jeopardous thing in the night if men of war enter into our lodgings; if they do, then we will draw to such a place, and thereby either we shall win or lose."

When the Englishmen entered into the field at the first, they soon overcame the varlets; and as they entered further in, always they found new men to busy them, and to skirmish with them. Then suddenly came the Scots from about the mountain, and set on the Englishmen ere they were aware, and cried their cries, whereof the Englishmen were sore astonished. Then they cried "*Percy!*"—and the other party cried "*Douglas!*" There began a cruel battle, and, at the first encounter, many were overthrown of both parties; and because the Englishmen were of a great number, and greatly desired to vanquish their enemies, they greatly did put aback the Scots, so that the Scots were near discomfited. Then the Earl James Douglas, (who was young and strong, and of great desire to get praise and grace, and was willing to deserve to have it, and cared for no pain or trouble,) came forth with his banner, and cried "Douglas! Douglas!" and Sir Henry Percy, and Sir Ralph his brother, who had great indignation against the Earl Douglas, because he had won the penon of their arms at the barriers before Newcastle, came to that part and cried "Percy!" Their two banners met and their men; there was a sore fight; the Englishmen were so strong, and fought so valiantly, that they recoiled the Scots back. There were two valiant knights of Scots under the banner of the Earl Douglas, called Sir Patrick of Hepburn, and Sir Patrick his son: they acquitted themselves that day

valiantly; the earl's banner had been won, an they had not been, they defended it so valiantly; and in the rescuing thereof they did such feats of arms that it was greatly to their recommendation, and to their heirs for ever after.

This was shewed me by such as had been at the same battle, as well by knights and squires of England as of Scotland, at the house of the Count of Foix. For anon after this battle was done, I met at Orthes two squires of England, called John of Newcastle, and John of Canteron; also when I returned from Avignon, I found there a knight and a squire of Scotland; I knew them, and they knew me by such tokens as I shewed them of their country. For I, author of this book, in my youth, had ridden nigh over all the realm of Scotland; and I was then a fifteen days in the house of Earl William Douglas, (father to the same Earl James of whom I spake but now) in a castle a five leagues from Edinburgh, in the country of Dalkeith. At the same time I saw there this Earl James, a fair young child, and a sister of his, called the Lady Blanche.

I was informed by both these parties how this battle was as sore a battle fought as hath lightly heard of before of such a number: and I believe it well; for Englishmen on the one part, and Scots on the other part, are good men of war: for when they meet there is hard fighting without sparring. There is no love between them, as long as spears, swords, axes or daggers will endure; but they lay on each upon the other, and when they be well beaten, and that the one part hath obtained the victory, then they glorify so in their deeds of arms, and are so joyful, that such as be taken they shall be ran-

somed ere they go out of the field, so that shortly each of them is so content with the other, that at their departing courteously, they will say, "God thank you." But in fighting one with the other, there is no play nor sparring; and this is true, and that shall well appear by this said rencounter, for it was as valiantly foughten as could be devised, as ye shall hear.

Knights and squires were of good courage on both parts to fight valiantly; cowards there had no place, but hardiness reigned with goodly feats of arms, for knights and squires were so joined together at hand-stroke, that archers had no place of neither party. There the Scots shewed great hardiness, and fought merrily, with great desire of honour; the Englishmen were three to one. Howbeit, I say not but the Englishmen did nobly acquit themselves; for ever the Englishmen had rather been slain or taken in the field than to flee. Thus, as I have said, the banners of Douglas and Percy and their men were met each against the other, envious who should win the honour of that journey. At the beginning, the Englishmen were so strong, that they recoiled back their enemies; then the Earl Douglas, who was of great heart, and high of emprise, seeing his men recoil back, to recover the place and to shew knightly valour, he took his axe in both his hands, and entered so into the press that he made himself way in such wise that none durst approach unto him; and he was so well armed that he bare well off such strokes as he received. Thus he went ever forward, like a hardy Hector, willing alone to conquer the field, and to discomfit his enemies; but, at last, he was encountered with three spears all at once. The one struck him on the shoulder, the other on the breast, and the stroke glanced down to his

belly, and the third struck him in the thigh, and sore hurt with all three strokes, so that he was borne per force to the earth; and after that he could not be well again relieved. Some of his knights and squires followed him, but not all; but it was night, and no light but by the shining of the moon. The Englishmen knew they had borne one down to the earth, but they wist not who it was, for if they had known that it had been the Earl Douglas, they had been thereof so joyful, and so proud, that the victory had been theirs; nor also the Scots knew not of that adventure till the end of the battle; for if they had known it, they should have been so sore dispared and discouraged that they would have fled away. Thus, as the Earl Douglas was felled to the earth, he was stricken into the head with an axe, and another stroke through the thigh.

The Englishmen passed forth, and took no heed of him, they thought none otherwise but they had slain a man-at-arms. On the other part, the Earl George of Mar and of Dunbar fought right valiantly, and gave the Englishmen much ado, and cried "Follow Douglas! and set on the sons of Percy!"—Also Earl John of Moray, with his banner and men, fought valiantly, and set fiercely on the Englishmen, and gave them so much to do that they wist not whom to attend.

Of all the battles and encounterings that I have made mention of herebefore in all this history, great or small, this battle that I treat of now, was one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowards or faint hearts; for there was neither a knight nor squire but that did his endeavour, and fought hand to hand. The Earl of Northumberland's sons, Sir Henry and

Sir Ralph Percy, who were chief sovereign captains, acquitted themselves nobly; and Sir Ralph Percy entered in so far among his enemies that he was closed in and hurt; and he was so sore handled, that his breath was so short that he was taken prisoner by a knight of the Earl of Moray's, called Sir John Maxwell. In the taking, the Scottish knight demanded what he was, (for it was in the night, that he knew it not;) and Sir Ralph was so sore overcome, and bled fast, that at last he said, "I am Ralph Percy." Then the Scot said, "Sir Ralph, rescue or no rescue, I take you for my prisoner; I am Maxwell." "Well," quoth Sir Ralph, "I am content; but then take heed to me, for I am sore hurt, my hosen and my greaves are full of blood." Then the knight saw by him the Earl Moray, and said, "Sir, here I deliver to you Sir Ralph Percy as prisoner; but, Sir, let good heed be taken to him, for he is sore hurt." The earl was joyful at these words; and said, "Maxwell, thou hast well won thy spurs." Then he delivered Sir Ralph Percy to certain of his men, and they stopped and wrapped his wounds, and still the battle endured, not knowing who had as then the better; for there were many taken and rescued again that came to no knowledge.

Now let us speak of the young James, Earl of Douglas, who did marvels in arms ere he was beaten down. When he was overthrown the press was great about him, so that he could not relieve; for with an axe he had his death's wound. His men followed him as near as they could; and there came to him Sir James Lindsay, his cousin, and Sir John and Sir Walter Sinclair, and other knights and squires; and by him was a gentle knight of his, who followed him

all the day, and a chaplain of his, not like a priest, but like a valiant man-at-arms; for all that night he followed the earl with a good axe in his hands, and still skirmished about the earl there as he lay, and recoiled back some of the Englishmen with the great strokes that he gave. Thus he was found fighting near to his master, whereby he had great praise; and thereby the same year he was made archdeacon of Aberdeen. This priest was called Sir William of North Berwick; he was a tall man, and a hardy, and was sore hurt.

When the knights came to the earl, they found him in an evil case, and a knight of his lineage by him, called Sir Robert Harte; he had fifteen wounds in one place and another. Then Sir John Sinclair demanded of the earl how he did? "Right evil, cousin," quoth the earl; "but thanked be God, there hath been but few of my ancestors that hath died in their beds; but, cousin, I require you to think to revenge me, for I reckon myself but dead, for my heart fainteth oftentimes. My cousin, water; and you, I pray you, raise up again my banner which lieth on the ground; and my squire David Campbell slain. But, Sirs, shew neither to friend or foe in what case ye see me in; for if our enemies knew it, they would rejoice, and our friends be discomfited."

The two brethren of Sinclair and Sir James Lindsay did as the earl had desired them; and raised up again his banner, and cried "Douglas!" Such as were behind and heard that cry, drew together and set on their enemies valiantly, and recoiled back the Englishmen, and many were overthrown, and so drove the Englishmen back beyond the place wherein the earl lay, who was by that time dead, and so came to the

earl's banner, the which Sir John Sinclair held in his hands; and many good knights and squires of Scotland about him; and still company drew to the cry of "Douglas." Thither came the Earl Moray, with his banner well accompanied, and also the Earl of Mar, and of Dunbar; and when they saw the Englishmen recoil, and their company assembled together, they renewed again the battle, and gave many hard and sad strokes.

To say truth, the Englishmen were sorer travailed than the Scots; for they came the same day from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a six English miles, and went a great pace, to the intent to find the Scots, which they did; so that by their fast going they were near out of breath, and the Scots were fresh and well rested, which greatly availed them when time was of their business; for in the last skirmish they recoiled back the Englishmen in such wise that after that, they could no more assemble together, for the Scots passed through their battles. And it fortuned, that Sir Henry Percy and the Lord of Montgomery, a valiant, knight of Scotland, fought together hand to hand right valiantly, without letting of any other, for every man had enough to do; so long they two fought that, per force of arms, Sir Henry Percy was taken prisoner by the said Lord of Montgomery.

The knights and squires of Scotland right valiantly did acquit themselves; and on the English party before that the Lord Percy was taken, and after, they fought valiantly. Whereto should I write long process?—this was a sore battle and well foughten; and as fortune is always changeable, though the Englishmen were more in number than the Scots, and were right valiant men of war, and well expert; and that at the

first point they recoiled back the Scots,—yet, finally, the Scots obtained the place and victory; and all the aforesaid Englishmen were taken, and a hundred more; saving Sir Matthew Redman, captain of Berwick, who, when he knew no remedy nor recoverance, and saw his company fly from the Scots, and yielding them on every side, then he took his horse and departed to save himself. The same season, about the end of this discomfiture, there was an English squire called Thomas Felton, a goodly and a valiant man; and that was well seen, for of all that night he would neither fly nor yield him. It was said, he had made a vow at a feast in England, that the first time he ever saw Englishmen and Scots in battle he would so do his endeavour, according to his power, in such wise, that either he would be reputed for the best doer on both sides, or else would die in the pain. He was called a valiant and a hardy man, and did so much by his prowess, that under the banner of the Earl of Moray he did such valiantness in arms that the Scots had marvel thereof, and he so was slain in fighting. The Scots would gladly have taken him alive, but he would never yield; he hoped ever to have been rescued; and with him there was a Scottish squire slain, cousin to the king of Scots, called Simon Glendenning; his death was greatly complained of to the Scots. This battle was fierce and cruel till it came to the end of the discomfiture; but when the Scots saw the Englishmen recoil and yield themselves, then the Scots were courteous, and set them to their ransom, and every man said to his prisoner, "Sir, go and unarm you and take your ease, I am your master;" and so made their prisoners as good cheer as though they had been brethren, without doing to them any damage. The chase endured but

a five English miles, and if the Scots had been men enough, there had none escaped, but either they had been taken or slain. And if Archibald Douglas, and the Earl of Fife, the Earl Sutherland, and other of the great company (who were gone towards Carlisle,) had been there, by all likelihood they had taken the Bishop of Durham and the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I shall shew you how.

CAP. IV.

OF THE HOST OF THE BISHOP OF DURHAM.

The same evening that the Percys departed from Newcastle (as ye have heard before) the Bishop of Durham, with the rear band, came to Newcastle and supped; and, as he sat at the table, he had imagination in himself how he did not acquit himself well to see the Englishmen in the field and he to be within the town. Incontinent he caused the table to be taken away, and commanded to saddle his horses and to sound the trumpets, and called upon men in the town to arm themselves, and to mount on their horses, and the footmen to order themselves ready to depart; and thus every man departed out of the town to the number of seven thousand, two thousand on horseback, and five thousand a foot. They took their way toward Otterbourne, whereat the battle had been, and by that time they had gone two miles from Newcastle, tidings came to them how their men were fighting with the Scots; therewith the bishop rested there, and incontinent came more flying fast that they were out of breath: then they were demanded how the matter went, they answered and said—"Right evil! we be all discomfited. Here cometh the Scots chasing of us." These tidings troubled the Englishmen, and they began to doubt. And, again the third time, men came flying as

fast as they might. When the men of the bishopric of Durham heard of these evil tidings, they were abashed in such wise that they broke their array, so that the bishop could not hold together the number of five hundred. It was thought that if the Scots had followed them in any number, seeing it was night, that in the entering into the town, and the Englishmen so abashed, the town had been won.

The Bishop of Durham being in the field had good will to have succoured the Englishmen, and recomfited his men as much as he could, but he saw his own men fly as well as other. Then he demanded counsel of Sir William Lucy and of Sir Thomas Clifford, and of other knights, what was best to do? These knights, for their honour, would give him no counsel; for they thought to return again and do nothing should sound greatly to their blame, and to go forth might be to their damage, and so stood still, and would give none answer: and, the longer they stood, the fewer they were, for some still stole away. Then the bishop said—"Sirs, all things considered, it is no honour to put all in peril, nor to make of one evil damage twain. We hear how our company be discomfited, and we cannot remedy it; for, to go to recover them we know not with whom, nor what number we shall meet, let us return fair and easily to Newcastle, and to-morrow let us draw together and go look on our enemies." Every man answered—"As God will, so be it." Therewith they returned to Newcastle. Thus a man may consider the great default that is in men that be abashed and discomfited, for if they had kept them together and have turned again such as fled, they had discomfited the Scots: this was the opinion of divers, and because they did not thus, the Scots had the victory.

I shall shew you of Sir Mathew Reedman who was on horseback to save himself, for he alone could not remedy the matter. At his departing Sir James Lindsay was near to him, and saw how Sir Mathew departed, and this Sir James to win honour, followed in chase Sir Mathew Reedman, and came so near him, that he might have stricken him with his spear if he had list: then he said—"Ah, Sir Knight, turn! it is a shame thus to fly. I am James of Lindsay, if ye will not turn I shall strike you on the back with my spear." Sir Mathew spoke no word, but struck his horse with the spurs sorer than he did before. In this manner he chased him more than three miles, and, at last, Sir Mathew Reedman's horse foundered and fell under him; then he stept forth on the earth, and drew out his sword and took courage to defend himself, and the Scot thought to have stricken him on the breast, but Sir Mathew Reedman swerved from the stroke, and the spear point entered into the earth. Then Sir Mathew struck asunder the spear with his sword, and when Sir James Lindsay saw how he had lost his spear, he cast away the truncheon and alighted a foot, and took a little battle-axe that he carried at his back and handled it well with his one hand quickly and cleverly, in which feat Scots be well expert; and then he set at Sir Mathew, and he defended himself properly. Thus they tourneyed together, one with an axe and the other with a sword a long season; and no man to let them; finally, Sir James Lindsay gave the knight such strokes and held him so short, that he was put out of breath in such wise that he yielded himself, and said—"Sir James Lindsay, I yield me to you." "Well," quoth he, "and I receive you rescue or no rescue." "I am content," quoth Reedman, "so ye

deal with me like a good companion." "I shall not fail that," quoth Lindsay, and so put up his sword. "Well, Sir," quoth Reedman, "what will ye now that I shall do? I am your prisoner, ye have conquered me; I would gladly go again to Newcastle, and within fifteen days I shall come to you into Scotland whereas ye shall assign me." "I am content," quoth Lindsay, "ye shall promise by your faith to present yourself within these three weeks at Edinburgh, and wheresoever ye go to repute yourself my prisoner." All this Sir Mathew swore and promised to fulfil. Then each of them took their horses, and took leave each of the other. Sir James returned, and his intent was to go to his company the same way that he came, and Sir Mathew Reedman to Newcastle. Sir James Lindsay could not keep the right way as he came; it was dark and a mist, and he had not ridden half a mile but he met face to face with the Bishop of Durham, and more than five hundred Englishmen with him. He might well have escaped if he would, but he supposed it had been his own company that had pursued the Englishmen. When he was among them, one demanded of him who he was? "I am," quoth he, "Sir James Lindsay." The bishop heard those words and stepped to him and said—"Lindsay, ye are taken! yield to me." "Who be you," quoth Lindsay; "I am," quoth he, the Bishop of Durham." "And from whence come you, Sir?" quoth Lindsay. "I come from the battle," quoth the bishop, "but I struck never a stroke there; I go back to Newcastle for this night, and ye shall go with me." "I may not choose," quoth Lindsay, "since ye will have it so; I have taken, and I am taken; such are the adventures of arms." "Whom have ye taken?" quoth the

bishop. "Sir," quoth he, "I took in the chase Sir Mathew Reedman." "And where is he?" quoth the bishop. "By my faith, Sir, he is returned to Newcastle; he desired me to trust him on his faith for three weeks, and so have I done." "Well," quoth the bishop, "let us go to Newcastle, and there ye shall speak with him." Thus they rode to Newcastle together, and Sir James Lindsay was prisoner to the Bishop of Durham.

Under the banner of the Earl of Mar and Dunbar was taken a squire of Gascony, called John of Newcastle; and under the banner of the Earl of Moray, was taken his companion John de Cauteron. Thus the field was clear avoided ere the day appeared. The Scots drew together and took guides, and sent out scourers, to see if any were in the way from Newcastle, to the intent that they would not be troubled in their lodgings, wherein they did wisely; for, when the Bishop of Durham was come again to Newcastle, in his lodging, he was sore pensive and wist not what to say nor do; for he heard say how his cousins the Percys were slain or taken, and all the knights that were with them. Then he sent for all the knights and squires that were in the town; and when they were come he demanded of them, if they should leave the matter in that case, and said—"Sirs, we shall bear great blame if we thus return without looking on our enemies:" then they concluded by the sun-rising every man to be armed, and on horseback, and a foot, to depart out of the town and go to Otterbourne to fight with the Scots; this was warned through the town by a trumpet, and every man armed him; and they assembled before the bridge; and by the sun-rising they departed

by the gate towards Berwick, and took the way towards Otterbourne, to the number of ten thousand, what a foot and a horseback. They were not gone past two miles from Newcastle, when the Scots were signified that the Bishop of Durham was coming to them, and to fight: this they knew by their spies, such as they had set in the fields.

Now, after that Sir Mathew Reedman was returned to Newcastle, he had shewed to divers how he had been taken prisoner by Sir James Lindsay, and how that he was there in the town as his prisoner. As soon as the bishop was departed, Sir Mathew Reedman went to the bishop's lodging to see his master; and there he found him in a study, lying in a window; and he said—"What! Sir James Lindsay! What makes you here?"—Then Sir James came forth of the study to him and gave him good-morrow, and said—"By my faith, Sir Mathew, fortune hath brought me hither; for as soon as I was departed from you, I met by chance the Bishop of Durham, to whom I am prisoner as ye be to me; I believe ye shall not need to come to Edinburgh to me to make your finance: I think rather we shall make an exchange one for the other, if the bishop be so content." "Well, Sir," quoth Reedman, "we shall accord right well together; ye shall dine this day with me; the bishop and our men be gone forth to fight with your men; I cannot tell what shall fall, we shall know at their return." "I am content to dine with you," quoth Lindsay. Thus these two knights dined together in Newcastle.

When the knights of Scotland were informed how the Bishop of Durham came on them with ten thousand men, they drew to council to see what was best

for them to do, either to depart or else to abide the adventure: all things considered, they concluded to abide, for they said they could not be in a better nor a stronger place than they were in already: they had many prisoners, and they could not carry them away, if they should have departed; and also they had many of their men hurt, and also some of their prisoners, whom they thought they would not leave behind them: thus they drew together, and so ordered their field, that there was no entry but one way, and they set all their prisoners together, and made them to promise how that, rescue or no rescue, they should be their prisoners; after that they made all their minstrels to blow up all at once, and made the greatest revel of the world. Lightly it is the usage of Scots that when they be assembled together in arms, the footmen beareth about their necks horns in manner like hunters, some great, some small, and of all sorts, so that when they blow all at once they make such a noise that it may be heard a-nigh four miles off—thus they do to abash their enemies and to rejoice themselves.

When the Bishop of Durham, with his banner and ten thousand men with him, were approached within a league, then the Scots blew their horns in such wise that it seemed that all the devils in hell had been among them, so that such as heard them and knew not of their usage were sore abashed. This blowing and noise endured a long space and then ceased. And by that time the Englishmen were within less than a mile. Then the Scots began to blow again and made a great noise, and as long endured as it did before. Then the Bishop approached with his battle well ranged in good order, and came within sight of the

Scots, as within two bow-shots or less. Then the Bishop took counsel to see what the Scots would do, and aviewed them well, and saw how they were in a strong ground greatly to their advantage; then the Bishop took counsel what was best for him to do; but, all things well advised, they were not in purpose to enter in among the Scots to assail them, but returned without doing of anything, for they saw well they might rather lose than win. When the Scots saw the Englishmen recoil, and that they should have no battle, they went to their lodgings and made merry, and then ordained to depart from thence. And because that Sir Ralph Percy was sore hurt, he desired of his master that he might return to Newcastle, or into some place whereas it pleased him, until such time as he were whole of his hurts, promising, as soon as he were able to ride, to return into Scotland, either to Edinburgh, or to any other place appointed; the Earl of Mar, under whom he was taken, agreed thereto, and delivered him a horse litter, and sent him away. And by like covenant divers other knights and squires were suffered to return, and took time either to return or else pay their freance, such as they were appointed unto. It was shewed me by the informations of the Scots, such as had been at this said battle, that was between Newcastle and Otterbourne, in the year of our Lord God a thousand three hundred four score and eight, the nineteenth day of August,—how that there were taken prisoners of the English party a thousand and forty men, one and other, and slain in the field and in the chase one thousand eight hundred and forty, and sore hurt more than a thousand; and of the Scots there were a hun-

dred slain, and taken in the chase more than two hundred; for, as the Englishmen fled, when they saw any advantage they returned again and fought; by that means the Scots were taken and none otherwise. Every man may consider it was a well-fought field, when there were so many slain and taken on both parts.

CAP. V.

OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE INROAD.

AFTER this battle, thus finished, every man returned; and the Earl Douglas's dead body being chested and laid in a chair, and with him Sir Robert Hart and Simon Glendenning, then they prepared to depart. So they departed, and led with them Sir Henry Percy, and more than forty knights of England, and took the way to the abbey of Melrose; at their departing they set fire to their lodgings, and rode all the day, and yet lay that night in the English ground: none denyed them. The next day, they dislodged early in the morning, and so came that day to Melrose: it is an abbey of black monks on the border between both realms; there they rested. and buried the Earl James Douglas. The second day after, his obsequy was done reverently, and on his body laid a tomb of stone, and his banner hanging over him. Whether there were as then any more Earls of Douglas to whom the land returned or not I cannot tell: for I, Sir John Froissart, author of this book, was in Scotland in the earl's castle of Dalkeith, living Earl William, at which time he had two children, a son and a daughter; but, after, there were many of the Douglases; for I have seen a five brethren all squires, bearing the name of Douglas in the King of Scotland's house, David. They were sons to a knight in Scotland, called Sir

James Douglas, and they bare in their arms gold, three oriels gules; but as for the heritage I know not who had it. As for Sir Archibald Douglas, of whom I have spoken before in this History in divers places, who was a valiant knight, and greatly redoubted of the Englishmen, he was but a bastard.

When the Scots had been at Melrose abbey, and done there all that they came thither for, then they departed each from the other, and went into their own countries; and such as had prisoners, some led them away with them, and some were ransomed and suffered to return. Thus the Englishmen found the Scots right courteous and gentle in their deliverance and ransom, so that they were well content. This was shewed me in the county of Bierne, in the Count of Foix's house, by a knight named John of Chateauneuf, who was taken prisoner at the same journey under the banner of the Earl of Mar and Dunbar, and he greatly praised the said earl, for he suffered him to pass in manner as he desired himself.

Thus these men of war of Scotland departed and ransomed their prisoners, as soon as they might, right courteously, and so returned little and little into their own countries. And it was shewed me, and I believed it well, that the Scots had, by reason of that journey, two hundred thousand francs for ransoming of prisoners; for since the battle that was before Stirling in Scotland, whereas Sir Robert of Bruce, Sir William Douglas, Sir Robert Versey, Sir Simon Freysele, and other Scots, chased the Englishmen three days,—they never had journey so profitable, nor so honourable for them as this was. When tidings came to the other company of the Scots that were beside Carlisle,

how their company had distressed the Englishmen beside Otterbourne, they were greatly rejoiced, and displeased in their minds that they had not been there. Then they determined to dislodge, and to draw into their own country, seeing their other company were withdrawn Thus they dislodged and entered into Scotland.

END OF THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

NOTE

ON THE

BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

FROISSART'S narrative of the battle of Otterbourne is given on the authority of knights both English and Scottish, and of one of the county of Foix, whom he met during his residence at Orthez, of which the reader has been presented with a detailed account. These knights, who had all been personally engaged in the action, could probably furnish the historian with matter from which, by comparing and contrasting any points of discrepancy arising from national prejudice, he might be able to compile a faithful and impartial description of the event. The details, also, must have been quite fresh in the memory of his informants; for the battle was fought in August, 1388—and it was at the subsequent Christmas that Froissart was at the Count de Foix's court.

It is, perhaps, worthy of remark, considering these circumstances, and Froissart's strong love for every thing smacking of the ominous and romantic, that he makes no mention of the singular belief of Earl Douglas, at his death, that his fall was fated to decide the fortune of the battle. "It is an old prophecy," said he, "that a dead man shall gain a field, and I hope it may be accomplished

this night." In the Scottish ballad of the Battle of Otterbourne, this prophecy takes the shape of a dream:—

"But I hae dreamed a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I."

The death of Douglas was concealed till the conclusion of the battle. After he was beaten down, he was found by some of his party with the squires of his body slain around him, and his chaplain bravely defending him as he lay on the gronnd. It has been sometimes said that he was not killed by the enemy, but assassinated by one of his own pages, who is stated purposely to have left his armour open behind, whereby to strike the Earl more surely. The reason assigned for this treachery is a blow given by Douglas to this man, the day before, for negligence or awkwardness in performing some military duty. But the more credible authorities all deny this rumour to have any foundation. It is mentioned, however, by several writers, that Douglas was carelessly and imperfectly armed, a circumstance probably arising from the suddenness of Hotspur's attack upon the Scottish camp, while the whole host lay buried in sleep. He was succeeded by his brother, Archibald, called the Grim.*

The battle of Otterbourne has peculiar claims to literary notice; as it is supposed to have been the foundation of the famous ballad of Chevy Chase. It is certain that the latter is not the record, or poetical celebration, of any

* In after years, the house of Angus, descended from George the youngest brother, seems to have intimated that some doubt existed as to the regularity of this succession. It is possible that Archibald the Grim was the Sir Archibald Douglas mentioned by Froissart, p. 389.

actual event—but rather an ideal picture of a skirmish on the Border, in which several real circumstances are very naturally embodied. The number of those which occurred at the battle of Otterbourne, inserted in Chevy Chase, renders it probable that that conflict was the groundwork of the ballad. The names, also, of several of the combatants at Otterbourne figure in it—and, above all, that was the only occasion on which an Earl of Douglas fell fighting against the Percy. The respected editor of the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, who would approach this subject with the feelings of a clansman, has the following passage on this congruity, in his introduction to Chevy Chase. After fixing the date of the ballad, he thus proceeds:—" With regard to its subject, although it has no countenance in history, there is room to think that it had originally some foundation in fact. It was one of the laws of the Marches, frequently renewed between the two nations, that neither party should hunt in the other's borders without leave from the proprietors or their deputies. There had long been a rivalship between the two martial families of Percy and Douglas, which, heightened by the national quarrel, must have produced frequent challenges and struggles for superiority, petty invasions of their respective domains, and sharp contests for the point of honour, which would not always be recorded in history. Something of this kind, we may suppose, gave rise to the ancient ballad of 'the Hunting of the Cheviot' (the original title of Chevy Chase). Percy, Earl of Northumberland, had vowed to hunt for three days in the Scottish border, without condescending to ask leave from Earl Douglas, who was either lord of the soil, or lord-warden of the Marches.

Douglas would not fail to resent the insult, and endeavour to repel the insult by force. This would naturally produce a sharp conflict between the two parties; something of which, it is probable, did really happen, though not attended with the tragical circumstances recorded in the ballad; for they are evidently borrowed from the battle of Otterbourne, a very different event, but which aftertimes would easily confound with it. That battle might be owing to some such previous affront as this of Chevy Chase, though it has escaped the notice of historians. The poet has evidently jumbled the two stories together —if, indeed, the lines in which the mistake is made are not rather spurious, and the after-insertion of the same person, who did not distinguish between the two stories."

The Battle of Otterbourne itself has, however, been the subject of legendary lore. There is an English ballad on the subject, which Dr. Percy supposes to be as ancient as the reign of Henry VI.; and a Scottish one, inserted in the Border Minstrelsy, each leaning somewhat to their respective countries. The narrative of Froissart is appealed to by the Editors of both works as an impartial account; and, indeed, it was likely, from the circumstance of hospitality and kindness having been shown to him, on his journey into Scotland, by the chieftains on both sides the Border, that Froissart would hold the balance pretty equally between them. The two ballads have considerable points of resemblance;— the opening stanza of each is nearly the same:—

> "Yt felle abowght the Lammasse tyde,
> When husbonds wynn their haye,
> The dowghtye Dowglasse bowynd hym to ryde,
> In Ynglond to take a preye.'
>
> *Percy's Reliques.*

"It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Earl of Douglas rode
Into England, to catch a prey."

Scott's Minstrelsy.

The reader who may be curious to compare the two poems, will find them, respectively, the second ballad in each collection;—which, as the arrangement is chronological, sufficiently bespeaks their great age—only one ballad, English or Scottish, being considered entitled to precedence, in point of date. Indeed, Dr. Percy seems to doubt whether Chevy Chase, the first ballad in the Reliques, were not written subsequently to that of the Battle of Otterbourne.

Both editors illustrate these legends by annotations of minute local interest and family history. The site of the localities of the Marches, and the pedigree of the various border families, are duly noticed. But these details of antiquarianism do not come within the plan of this work; and I therefore shall add no further comment to old Froissart's vivid and complete narrative. It may, perhaps, however, be interesting to mention, that Hotspur, the Sir Henry Percy of this story, built, for his ransom, the Castle of *Penoon*, in Ayrshire, belonging to the Montgomeries, from whom the Earls of Eglintoun are descended. Query, whether the Scottish captor gave this name to his castle, from the circumstance of Hotspur's *pennon* having been taken in the battle? Such practical puns are by no means inconsistent with the manners of the middle ages.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

ERRATA IN THE SECOND VOLUME.

Page 85, foot-note; *for* page 4, *read* page 69.
Page 150, last line; *for* second and third, *read* third and fourth.
Page 165, line 9: *for* June, *read* September.
Ibid. line 15; *for* the reign of, *read* the latter part of the reign of.
Page 197, line 8 from the bottom; for *precious*, read *previous*.
Page 208, line 20; *for* frequent absences from Béarn. On the part of Gaston IX., *read*, frequent absences from Béarn, on the part of Gaston IX.;
Page 225. The end of the parenthesis should be at the Pyrenees, line 7; instead of at Biscay, line 9.
Page 241, line 4; *for* that, *read* than.

London: Printed by William Clowes, Stamford-street.

